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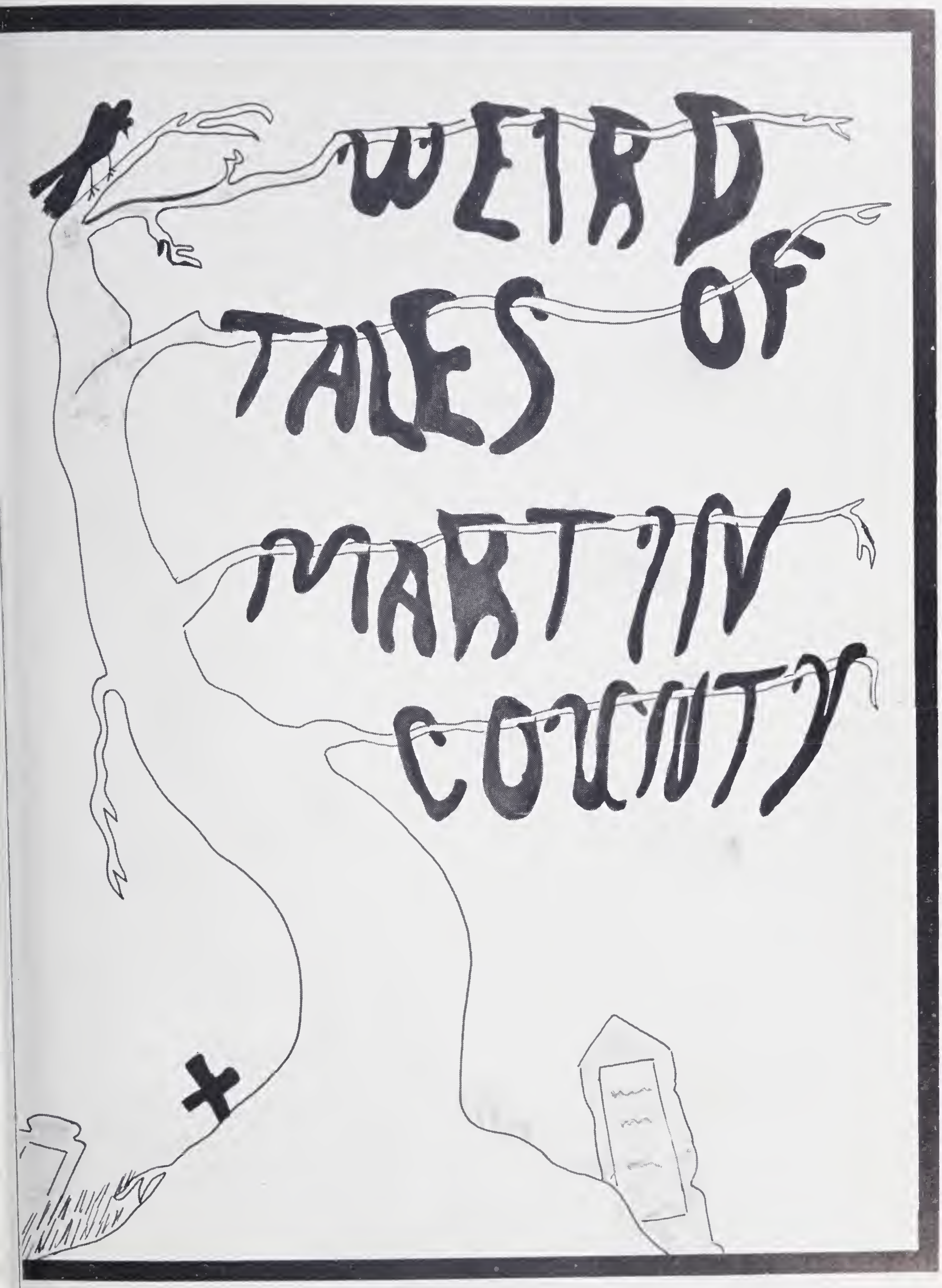
WEIRD
TALES OF
MARTIN
COUNTY

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WEIRD TALES OF MARTIN COUNTY

compiled by
"THE SKEWARKIANS"
Junior Historian Club
Bear Grass School
Williamston, North Carolina

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"THE SKEWARKIANS"

Books By "THE SKEWARKIANS"

Smoke To Gold: The Story of Tobacco In Martin County

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INTRODUCTION

In this age of television and movies, youth do not take the time to sit down and talk to elders as their parents did years ago. It not only has to do with their not taking time, but also it has to do with their not feeling the need to do so.

Years ago the only amusement a person had was what he could devise for himself. On long winter nights, instead of looking at television, boys and girls would sit around listening to stories told by their grandfathers who were master story tellers. They made the stories so real that the hair would raise up on the back of necks! Many times the stories would be about personal encounters with the supernatural or stories that had been handed down in the community for many years.

Ghost stories and folklore are an important part of oral history and they reflect not only the nature of a people's environment, but also their beliefs and customs that have survived throughout the years.

The stories in this book were collected and written by my eighth grade students in THE SKEWARKIANS Junior Historian Club at Bear Grass School in Martin County, North Carolina. Most of the photographs were taken at the original sites where the supernatural events occurred, thus providing a visual record of the events.

My students have had a good time talking with the "oldsters" in their families and communities and in their own way have helped close the "generation gap". I feel that by recording these stories, they have made a significant contribution to an often neglected aspect of local history.

Elizabeth Roberson, Advisor

(The Skiwarkians)

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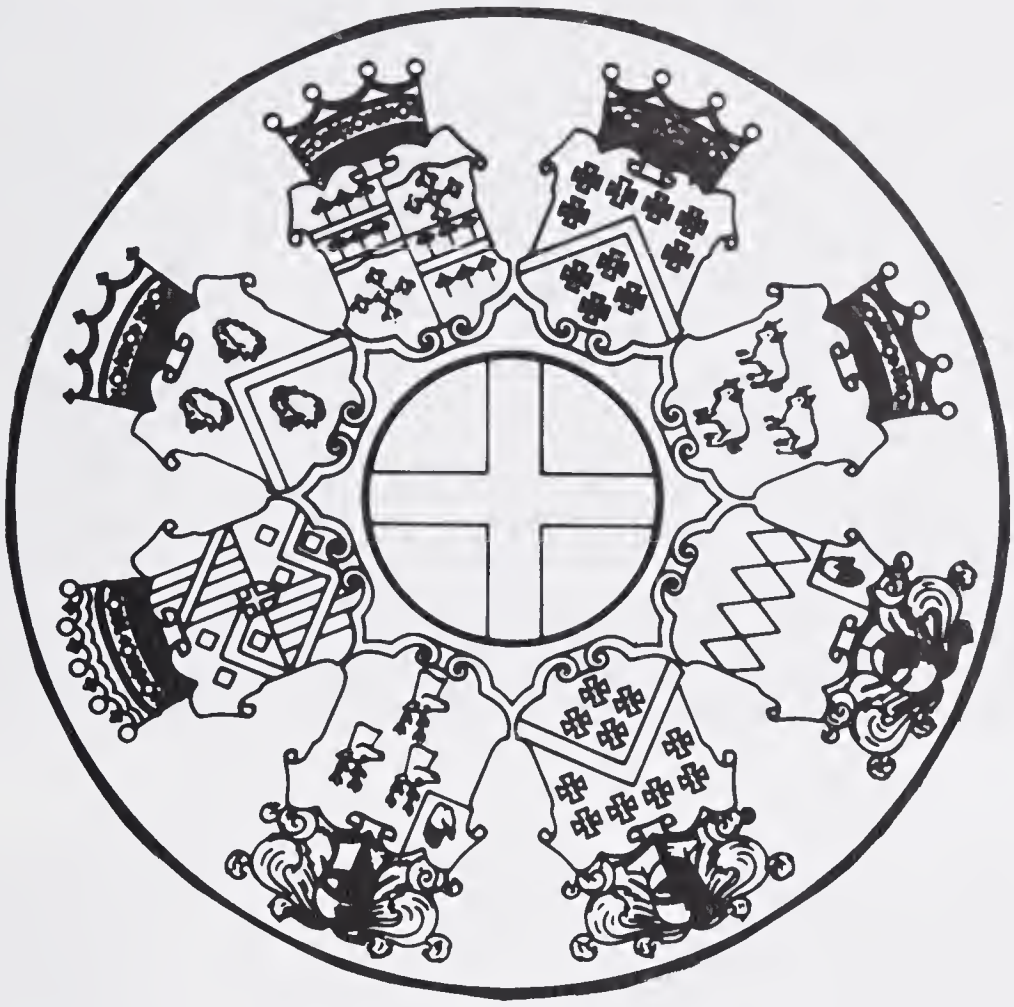
HOW BEAR GRASS GOT ITS NAME

There is a local legend concerning the origin of the name Bear Grass. It is said that the Indians took the blade of the Yucca Plant and separated it into strips and used them to hang up bear meat in their smokehouses. Since it was used mainly for this purpose, it acquired the name "bear grass" and since it grows so abundantly in this one area of Martin County, the community became known as Bear Grass.



"THE LEGEND OF SWINSON'S LIGHT"

by
Ann Bullock and Lisa Gurkin

The legend of "Swinson's Light" is probably the oldest ghost story that has been told in Bear Grass Township. No one knows where it had its beginning, and most of the events surrounding this legend are pure speculation.

The Earl of Granville, who was the last of the Lords Proprietors, had been given much land in North Carolina by the King of England. He kept his land holdings up until the time of the American Revolution, however he did give 900 acres of it, which bordered the Bear Grass Swamp, to a John Swinson around 1761.

In those days prior to the American Revolution, most people who had gold or precious jewels would bury them because of the lack of banks in which to keep them. The story was told that Swinson, who was quite wealthy, buried his valuables somewhere on his land, but where no one ever knew.

Over the years after his death, people began seeing a strange light in the swamp. It appeared at only certain times of the year and was described as being a huge ball of fire that came right in at treetop level and lighted up the whole area around it. The people in Bear Grass began saying that this light was Swinson's ghost guarding his buried treasure. There are people still living in Bear Grass who have seen this mysterious light within their lifetime, and those who have seen it wonder if the light really was Swinson, or if there really ever was any buried treasure. Probably Swinson carried his secret to his grave, but maybe someday the light will reveal the answer to its own mystery!

SOURCE: Tradition

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

Swinson burying his valuables somewhere on his farm.

After Swinson's death, people began seeing a strange light in the swamp.

"HER MOTHER'S SPIRIT"
by
Lisa Davenport

Late one summer afternoon, a young Williamston resident was gathering vegetables from her garden. While she was in the garden, she happened to glance up at the house and saw the figure of a woman who looked like her mother. The figure moved towards the house. She paid little attention to the figure, thinking her mother had gone in the yard for something.

After gathering her vegetables, the woman returned to the house and asked her mother what she had wanted with her. Her mother didn't seem to know what her daughter was talking about. Her daughter then said, "Mother didn't you just come out in the yard?" Her mother looked at her and said, "Why, no. I've been right here knitting this sock ever since you went out."

After telling her mother about the figure she had seen, her mother said, "You must have seen my spirit. It was telling you that I would soon be going away."

Within a few days of this occurrence, the mother passed away just as she had predicted.

SOURCE: Sally Davenport
Williamston, N.C.

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

All of a sudden we saw "him" coming toward us!

"THE RESTLESS SPIRIT"
as told by Phil Hodges

"On a cold February night in 1973, a friend and I were parked in front of the general store in Bear Grass. I was a senior in high school and my friend was home from college for the weekend. We hadn't seen each other in a long time and we were sitting there talking, when all of a sudden I saw 'him'!

When I first saw him, it was almost as if he had just appeared on the scene. I thought it strange that I hadn't noticed him twenty or thirty yards further down the road, since the entire area was lighted by a street light, and I was facing in that direction as we talked.

He was a slender, young man with short, blonde hair, who was probably not over 18 years old. He was wearing light colored trousers and a long-sleeved white shirt that seemed very different from the current fashions. The most surprising thing about him however, was the fact that he was wearing no coat and it was bitter cold weather.

He was walking at an incredibly fast pace and it seemed that in only a matter of seconds he was at the crossroads intersection, right close to our car. Neither my friend nor I recognized him, and since the two of us knew everyone in the area, it really seemed strange.

As he got closer to the car, I got out and asked him what he was doing out on such a cold night. He answered in a very low, strange voice, 'Just walking.' I asked if we could give him a ride somewhere, but there was no answer. I got back into the car, shivering from the extreme cold. Both of us gave each other the same puzzled look about this whole affair.

As the boy walked behind the car, I lost sight of him. We decided immediately to see what he was up to at this hour in Bear Grass. We backed the car into the road, but there was no one in sight! We were speechless. He should have been near the empty lot across from the store, but he was gone. We drove around in vain for about twenty minutes looking for some trace of him, but we knew that what we had seen was gone, vanished into thin air!

The next morning I was still puzzling over this turn of events and mentioned it to my mother who reminded me of something that had happened at that same corner in 1957. Three young men had come speeding through Bear Grass at a terrific rate of speed when their car went out of control. It struck a large oak tree in front of Mrs. Ida Harrison's house, killing all three of the boys. Their bodies were flung into the air, one of them landing on Mrs. Ida's porch. The tree that they hit was about 20 yards from where I had first seen the boy the night before.

After a while I forgot about this strange incident, but five years later it all came back to me when someone showed me a picture of the driver of the car, who had been killed in the wreck. He was a slim, young man with short, blonde hair; the same mysterious fellow I saw that cold night in February seven years ago!"

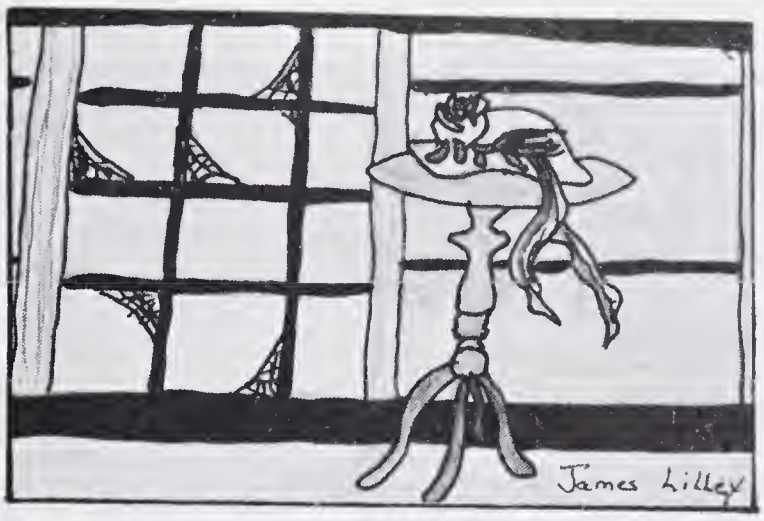
NEWSPAPER CLIPPING -

THE ENTERPRISE - February 3, 1957

"Three boys killed on the night of February 2, 1957; Hubert Earl Smith, 16; William Roberson, 21; Joseph Gurganus, 18. The driver was thrown 35 feet into the air and landed on Mrs. H.D. Harrison's porch. The impact tore out two posts and smashed the porch roof gutters."

SOURCE: Phil Hodges
Bear Grass Township

Photograph by Jim L. Dees



"THE BONNET"
by
Deborah Price
(as told by Mamie Roberson)

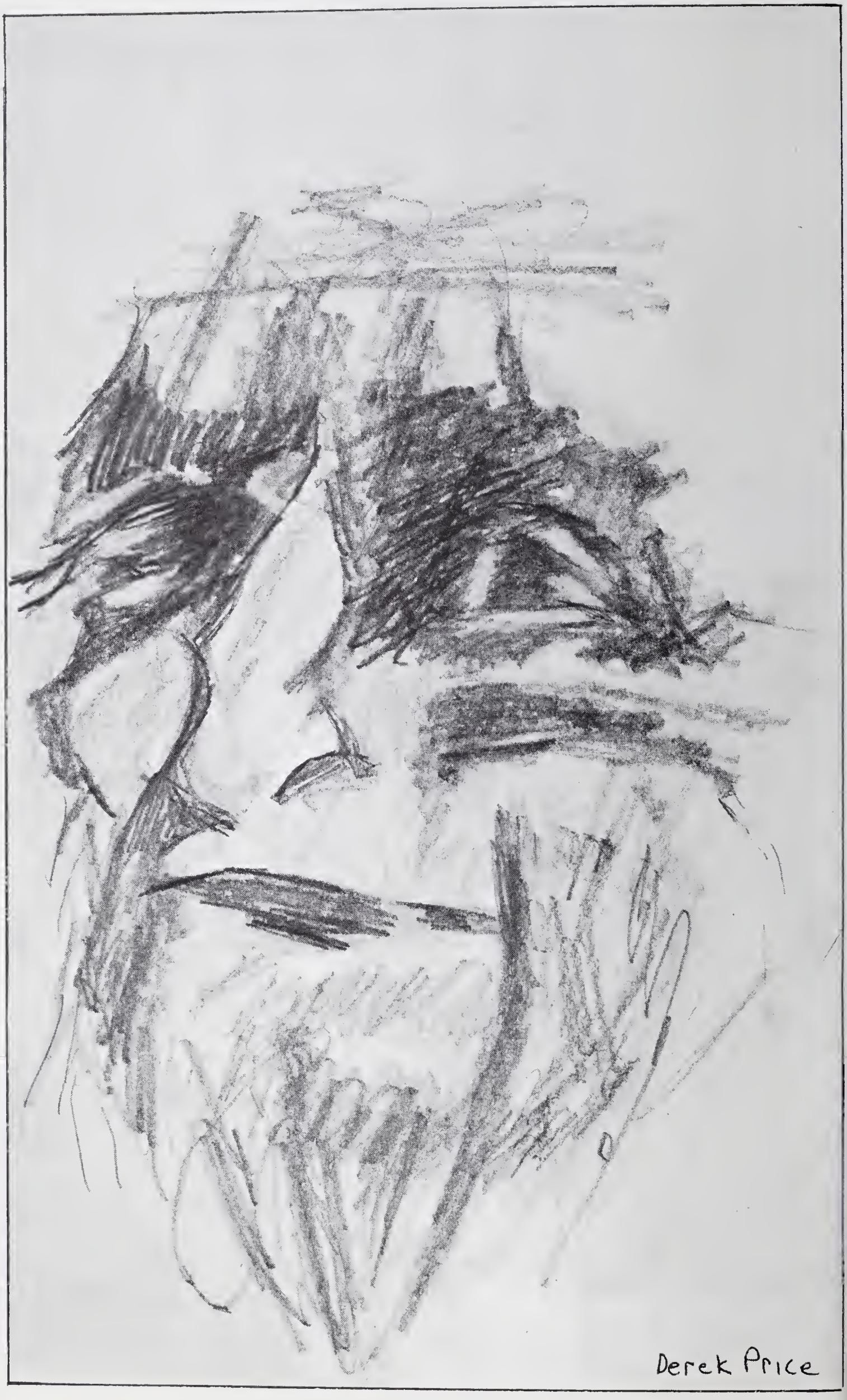
"My mother lived in a big three story house about four miles out of Jamesville down a dirt road in an area called the "Islands". The house they moved in had originally been built before the Civil War by the Smithwicks who were very well-to-do people.

The day my mother moved in she found a lot of old dresses and things up in the attic. She was very superstitious and didn't want us to bother anything up there. Even though she had told us not to bother anything, she found a bonnet that she especially liked. She didn't think that one little bonnet would matter to anyone so she took it out of the attic and put it on a small table at the bottom of the stairs.

Later, after everyone was asleep, my mother was awakened by something that sounded like a walnut rolling down the stairs. She went back to sleep and the next morning when she came downstairs the bonnet was gone from the table! We searched all over the house but the bonnet wasn't found anywhere. Finally, we went to the attic to see if there was another one there like it and much to our surprise we saw the bonnet in exactly the same place that it had been the day before.

Mother would not let us go back in the attic ever again and for the twenty-nine years that we lived there we never once returned to the attic! We moved away never knowing what had happened to all the things up there."

SOURCE: Mamie Roberson
Jamesville, N.C.


Derek Price

"NANCY RALEY, THE CONJURE WOMAN"
as told by Nettie Rogerson

"Back in the days when I was a little girl, everybody believed in 'conjurations' and we were afraid of anything out of the ordinary. We wouldn't dare cross a bottle in the road for fear it had something in it that would put a spell on us. Everything that was unusual was suspected of being hexed. There were also certain people in the community that we wouldn't dare cross!

One of the these people was old Nancy Raley. She had a name for doing all kinds of mischief and you'd better not make her mad! One day my daddy took her a load of corn that she had ordered from him. When he got to her house with it, she was angry and said that he was supposed to have brought that corn to her yesterday. They had a bad argument over it and finally my daddy dumped the corn out on the ground and turned to leave. She shook her fist at him and told him he'd be sorry that he had done that!

The next morning when he went out to the pig lot, he found all his pigs either dead or dying. He was frantic and he went to another 'conjure' woman to see if she could help him, for he knew this must be the work of Nancy Raley. The woman told him to go back home and find the very last pig that had died. He was then to cut off the right front foot of that pig, take a ten-penny nail, walk due East, turning out for nothing, and nail it to the first tree that was big enough for it to be nailed to.

He did as she told him and the moment he nailed the foot on the tree, Nancy Raley fell out in her yard with some sort of spell. When she fell, a pack of dogs fell upon her, tearing at her clothes and at the knitting that she had been carrying in her hands. She never recovered from the spell and died the next day.

We weren't ever positive that Nancy was a witch, but one thing for sure, when she died, many of the strange things stopped happening to folks around here!"

SOURCE: Mrs. Nettie Rogerson
Williamston, N.C.

As he nailed the pig's foot to the tree,

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

Nancy Raley fell out in the yard.

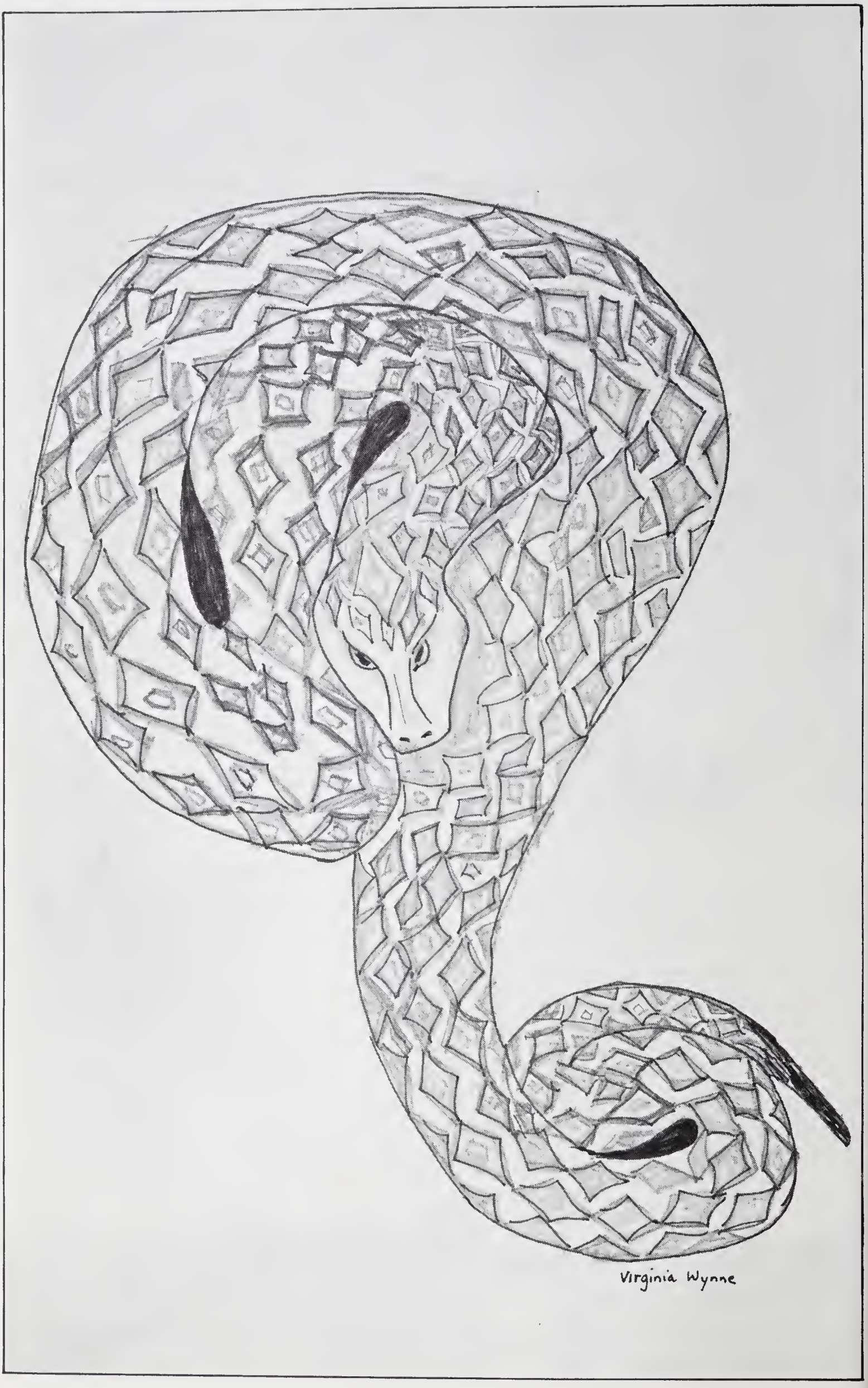
"THE WHITE DEER"
by Lisa Mizell & Tracy McKnight

There was a woman in Martin County who had a husband who loved to go hunting, but everytime he would go she would get very angry with him. Everytime he would go hunting, a certain white deer would upset the hunt and lead the dogs astray. He would shoot at it, but could never hit it. He began to think then that this was not just an ordinary deer, and might be the work of a witch.

He decided in order to kill it he would have to shoot it with a silver bullet. He chopped up a silver dime, and the next time he went hunting, he shot the deer in the hip with the silver. The deer fell but before he could get to her, she was gone.

When the man got home he found his wife in bed with a broken hip. No one could ever explain how she broke it and she was never able to walk again. She died an invalid.

SOURCE: Tradition


Virginia Wynne

"FRIENDS"
by
Ronnie Goss
(as told by his father)

"One night when my mother, father, brother, and sisters were all sitting around the fireplace, my father told me a story about a pair of twin girls he had known. He said that these little girls were born out in the country near Williamston and when they got to be about four years old they loved to play outdoors most of the time.

Everyday after they would eat, they would take part of their dinner and go outside with it. This went on for three or four weeks and the parents of the girls decided to follow them to see what they were doing with the food. The next day when they followed them they saw the girls feeding a large black snake under the shed in the back yard. The father couldn't believe his eyes and after the girls went back into the house, he got a hoe and killed the snake.

The next day when the girls went out to feed the snake, all they saw was a bloody spot on the ground where he had been killed. The girls were very upset and later on that day they were taken sick. The doctor was called to treat them, but said he couldn't find out what was making them sick. By sunset the girls were dead and no one ever knew what had killed them."

SOURCE: Edward Goss

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

The stricken brother fell in a pool of blood.

"THE BLOODSTAINS ON THE FLOOR"
by
Wendy Peele

In the early 1800's, the Latham brothers lived on a farm near Williamston. The two of them never seemed to get along with each other, and could often be seen arguing violently.

It was said that one of the brothers, tired of being intimidated by his brother, made arrangements for one of their slaves on the plantation to kill him. One day as the sun began to drop behind the trees, the slave boy saw the brother go into the house alone, and he decided that this would be a good chance to carry out his mission. He sneaked into the house after him, finding him on the stairs. Catching him off guard, he grabbed him and struck him in the head, killing him. The stricken brother fell in a pool of blood.

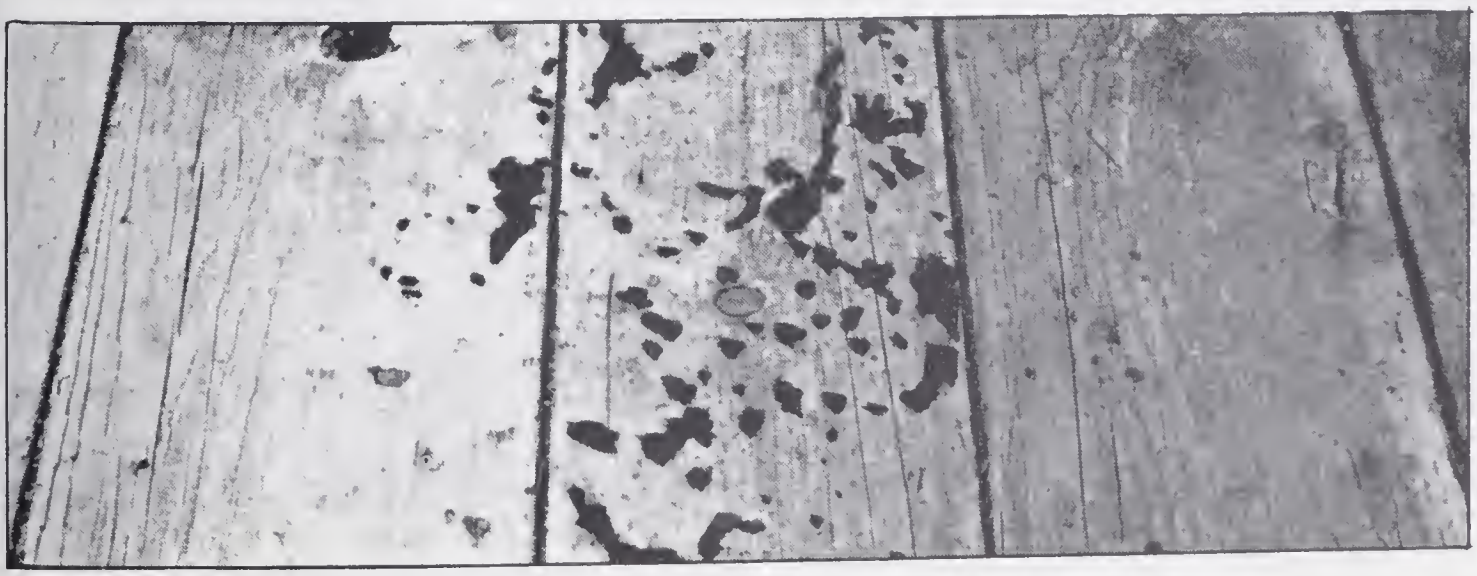
The slave boy hurriedly dragged the lifeless body down the stairs and out into the yard. He propped the body up against a tree in the yard and then went back into the house to clean up the blood on the stairs. He scrubbed and scrubbed, but the dark stains would not disappear.

The remaining brother continued to live in the house, but rarely got any rest at night. Strange noises were heard at all hours of the night. Dishes in the house would fall out of the cabinet mysteriously breaking on the floor. Things began to disappear from the house, and jars left on the stairs would fall and roll down for no apparent reason.

Conscience-stricken, the brother always had the terrible feeling that something dreadful was about to happen to him, and he finally stopped going upstairs where the bloodstains were visible. Eventually, from either loss of sleep or pangs of conscience, they said the poor fellow finally went crazy, and one day a loud scream was heard coming from the house. One of the slaves ran in to see what had happened and found the brother sprawled across the bottom of the stairs, dead! No one really knew what had happened, but it was thought maybe he had finally gotten up enough courage to go up the stairs to stop whatever was up there bothering him, but maybe "it" stopped him first!

In the years after Latham's death, other members of the family occupied the house. They tried in vain to remove the bloodstains from the stairs. They sanded the boards, painted them, and re-painted them. Nothing would remove them. The stains were particularly visible during rainy weather. The last person to live there, my Aunt Mandy Perry, finally gave up trying to remove the stains and put a rug over them to keep them hidden from view. This made it much easier for her to live here alone, for the many years that she did.

SOURCE: W.O. Peele, Jr.
(Relative of last owner of house,
Mrs. Mandy Perry)
Williamston, N.C.



Photograph by Jim L. Dees

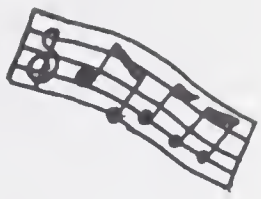
The blood stains on the floor are still visible today.

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

The couple arrived at the hotel.

She lost her balance and fell to the ground below.

"GHOST SONG IN THE NIGHT"
by
Cindy Harrison and Angie Mizelle



Back in the early days of the settlement of Williamston in Martin County, there was a large two story hotel in the town to accommodate the many travelers coming into the town by riverboat.

One day, a newly-wed couple arrived at the hotel to spend their wedding night. When they entered the large front room of the hotel, the bride's eyes fell on the large square grand piano there. She was an accomplished musician and loved to play the piano. She sat right down at the keyboard and began to play a most beautiful tune. Everyone in the room stood there spellbound as she played.

Soon the couple was taken to their room on the upper floor of the hotel. After going upstairs, they walked out on the porch to look at the beautiful view. The young man left the girl there and went back inside. Someone called from below and when the girl leaned over to see who it was, she lost her balance and fell to the ground. Hearing her screams, her husband rushed out to see what had happened and he looked down and saw her crumpled body lying on the ground below. By the time he got to her, she was dead.

The young man left the hotel with her body the next day and no one ever heard anything about him after that. Strangely enough however, in only a few weeks after his departure, people in the hotel began hearing music coming from the large front room of the hotel. It was always heard late at night after everyone had gone to bed. When they would get out of bed and go down to see who was playing, it stopped!

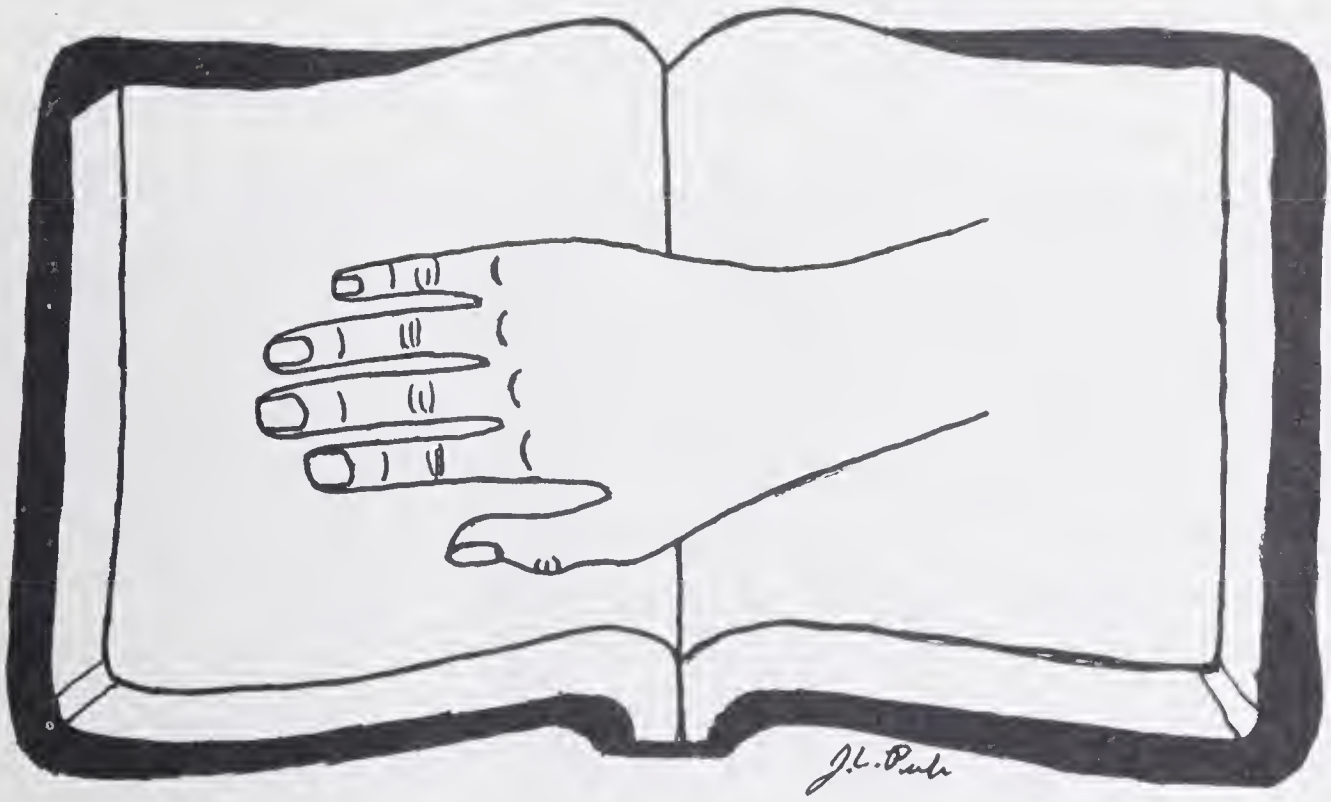
In the years following this event, the hotel was closed and the owners moved away. This didn't stop the music however, and even though the building was boarded up and deserted, the music could still be heard at night. The people in the neighborhood would venture up very close to the window when they heard the music, but upon close inspection the keys of the piano would be depressed, but no one could be seen sitting at the keyboard!

Finally the building burned and with its destruction, the spirit seemed to have been put to rest. No one could say for sure what caused the mysterious music, but there are many who heard it who said it was the young bride who had returned to play her wedding song one more time!

SOURCE: Mrs. Mary Clayton
Williamston, N.C.

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

The bride returned to play her wedding song one more time.



"THE HAND"
by John Peele

His job was to keep the fire going in the barn. He had finished and was now reading his Bible by the kerosene lamp he had in the barn with him.

As he was reading, a hand reached out and laid itself on the Bible. He jerked around to see where it had come from, and as he looked down a second time, it was gone!

The next night he was reading his Bible and the hand laid itself on the Bible again. He tried to grab it but he grabbed nothing!

The next night he took a big knife with him to the barn and when he saw the hand again he quickly cut it off!

When he went to his house, he found his wife in the bedroom crying with her hand cut off!

SOURCE: W.O. Peele, Sr.
Griffin's Township

Virginia Wynne

"BABY CHILÉ"

"It was on a warm summer's night while I was at the clothesline when I saw 'him' for the first time. He was a small Negro boy who looked to be about five years old and was wearing a white sailor suit with white knee socks. He had a small white sailor hat on his head. There was a gush of hot air coming from around him and he motioned for me to go back away from him. I moved back instinctively from the heat, and as I did, I saw a large rattlesnake that would have bitten me had I stepped any further. The little boy disappeared when he saw that I was out of danger. He next appeared to me one evening as I was sitting in my bedroom rocking. This time he walked over to me and laid his head on my lap and looked up into my face with a very sad expression on his face. Within minutes, the phone rang and it was a call from the hospital saying that my brother was seriously ill. As soon as I hung up the telephone, the little boy vanished. This is when I began to realize that this child was like a guardian angel who would protect me from harm or warn me of danger. It was that night that I began to call him 'Baby Chilé.'

Other people in my family could not see him as I did, but they could hear him running through the house. After a while we all began to accept the fact that he was here to stay and no one feared him.

One evening as I lay dozing in my room I awoke to see Baby Chilé standing at the foot of my bed. He had the same sad expression on his face that he had had before, and in a short time I got news that my aunt had had a bad fall and was seriously hurt.

Since I am a nurse, there are many nights that I have to go out and tend to sick people in the town where I live. One night as I went to my car, Baby Chilé was standing in front of the door and motioned to me to go back. He would not move and let me get in, so I laughed and went back into the house. My son went out to see what was the matter and Baby Chilé moved aside and let him get in the car. He checked it over carefully and found that I had no brakes! If I had driven it out of the yard, I could have been killed!

There are times when he appears with a happy look on his face. He smiles at me and seems pleased to be with me. So it seems that I can tell by his expression whether my day will be good or bad.

His most recent visit to me came just a few weeks ago after we had had a bad storm. I was walking from my neighbor's house back into my yard when "he" loomed up ahead of me motioning me to go back. By now I had learned to do as he bade and I moved back. Just as I did, a large limb from the pecan tree fell where I would have been standing!

I have often wondered who this little boy could be and why he has come to me. Some of the old folks tell of a little black boy his age who once lived here many years ago. They said that they had heard he had been murdered and buried somewhere in this yard. Maybe he is that little boy, but whoever he is I'm glad to know that he is here."

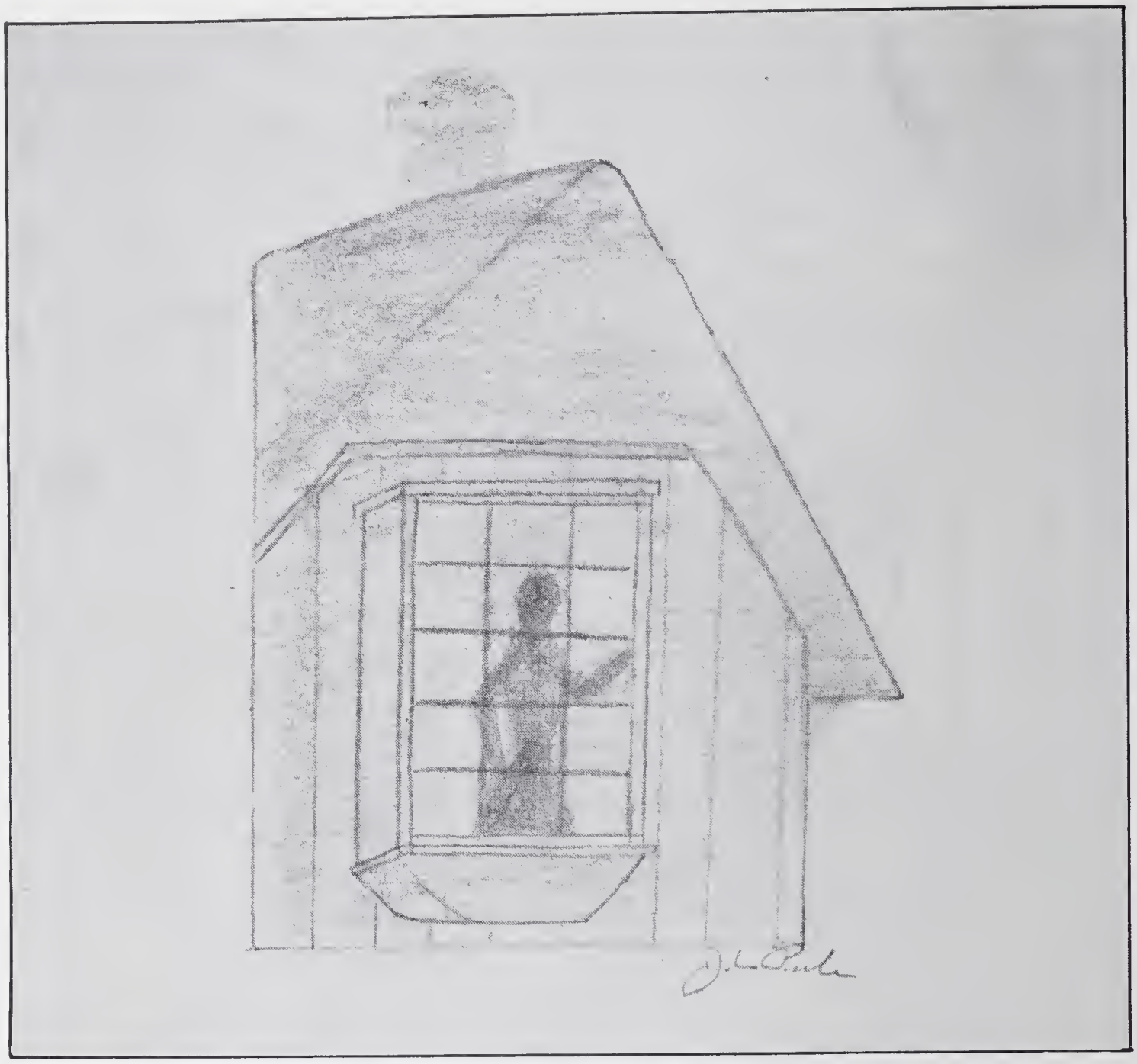
SOURCE: Anonymous

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

"Baby Chilé was in front of the car door and wouldn't let me get in."

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

t was that night I began to call him Baby Chile′ "



"THE GIRL IN BLUE"
by
Deborah Price
(as told by Mamie Roberson)

"A long time ago when I lived way out in the country, there was a young girl about to be married in our neighborhood. She was a strange girl and sometimes we worried about her. It was said that she had 'problems'. What kind of problems they were I don't know.

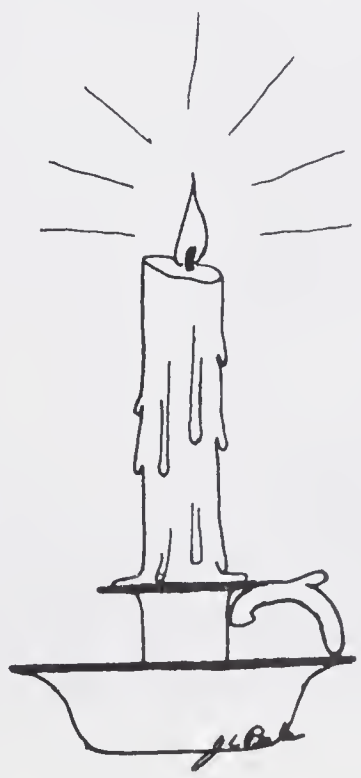
Well, on the day before her wedding they were having a big party at her house and everyone was having a wonderful time. Even the bride-to-be seemed to be enjoying herself when all of a sudden she ran from the room and ran upstairs, locking the door behind her. Soon a scream came from upstairs. Everyone ran up to see what had happened and there they found her lying on the floor in a pool of blood, her beautiful blue gown stained with blood. There was a long knife in her hand and they knew that she must have taken her own life, but no one could understand why.

Some of the people in the neighborhood said that they knew that she would come to this one day, but it was a shock to everyone who knew her. Her mother and fiancee were heartbroken and couldn't understand why she had done this.

After the girl's death, her family moved away and the house was closed up. Exactly one year after the girl's death, her fiancee was walking down the road in front of the house. He walked up to the deserted house and went up on the porch remembering how happy he had been just a few months before. When he walked back out to the road, he looked back at the house one more time when all of a sudden he saw a light in the upstairs bedroom that had been hers. At first he thought it must be a light that belonged to a tramp that might be camping in the house, but then he saw a figure appear in the window. It was a girl in a blue dress holding a candle in one hand and a knife in the other! He ran back up to the house, forced the door open, and ran up the stairs to her room. When he got there, the room was dark and no one was there.

When he told his story to the people in the community some of them laughed at him and told him it was just his imagination, but there were others who told him that they too had seen a figure in a blue dress roaming the house at night with a candle and knife. He never went back."

SOURCE: Mamie Roberson
Jamesville, N.C.



Out from between the stones emerged a woman in grey holding a silver platter and silver spade in her hands.

"THE WOMAN IN GREY"
by
Greg Hadley

There have been many stories of strange lights in the old Woodlawn Cemetery in Williamston, but the strangest story to emerge from that area occurred in the mid 1960's.

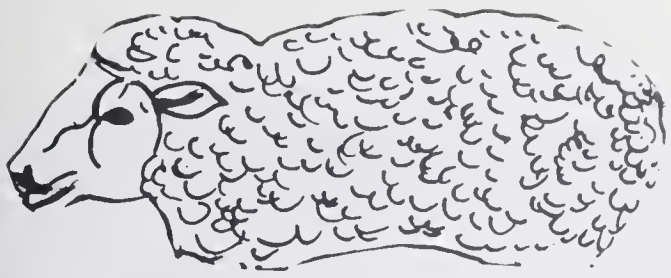
One foggy morning as a man in Williamston was making his rounds picking up the mail in boxes all around the town, he turned into one of the streets bordering the cemetery at the edge of town. His headlights shone on the tall grey tombstones as he made the turn and all of a sudden, out from between two of the stones there emerged a woman! Even though she was very small, she had the appearance of being a grown woman. She was dressed in a long, grey robe with a scarf of the same color on her head. She was holding a silver spade in one hand and a silver platter in the other. This gave her the appearance of being all one color from head to foot with no variation at all.

When the lights of the truck fell upon her, she turned and very slowly moved away. It seemed to the truck driver later as he was thinking about it, that she was unable to move any faster. When the man realized that this was a woman out at such an odd hour who might need his assistance, he quickly turned his truck around to go back and see if he could help her. Much to his surprise, when he returned to the spot where she had been standing, there wasn't a sign of her anywhere! He looked all around the area and could never find a trace of her at all, even though there was no way for her to have gotten out of the cemetery without passing by him.

Much shaken by his experience, he returned to the post office where he told his story to his fellow workers. They just laughed at him and were very skeptical about his story. They said that it was just someone out stealing flowers from the graves. Seeing that he could not convince them otherwise, the man never talked of the experience to them again, but in his own mind he went over all the events again and again.

Could she have been stealing flowers? Not likely, he thought, since she was in the old part of the cemetery where flowers were rarely put on the graves. Could she have been just taking a walk? Not likely, he thought, because what woman in her right mind would take a leisurely walk in a cemetery at 4:00 in the morning? No, he didn't speak of it again, but in his own mind he knew that what he had seen was not of this earth!

SOURCE: "Plum" Rogers, Deputy Sheriff
of Martin County from his
eye witness account



"THE LEGLESS LAMB"
by
Sharon Hodges

In the days before the Civil War, a slave boy was walking down a country road near Williamston one day, when several men accosted him and demanded to know where he was going. The boy told them that he was running an errand for his master, but not satisfied with his answer the men jumped on the boy and beat him severely, leaving him along the road to die. Luckily two white men happened to come along that way and found the boy bleeding and in a dying condition. They carried him to a nearby house where they tried to make him more comfortable. Their efforts were in vain however and the boy slipped slowly into the waiting arms of death. Just before he died, he made a horrible gasping noise that sent chills up and down the spines of the two men. It was a sound that they would never forget as long as they lived!

Several months later when the two men were passing through the woods, they saw a strange light in the woods that seemed to be moving slowly along the ground. It moved along until it reached the spot where they had found the young slave boy several months before. All of a sudden they heard the same blood curdling sound that the boy had made before he died. The most terrifying thing to happen however, was the sudden appearance of a lamb right on the spot, but a lamb that had no legs! Very slowly one of the men moved up to where the lamb stood and moved his hand back and forth under it to be sure that it really had no legs and his hand moved effortlessly under the lamb just like a hot knife through butter. The other man sensing something unusual, took his knife from his pocket and when he clicked it open, the image of the lamb vanished into thin air as suddenly as it had appeared. They searched all over the area, but no trace of the lamb or its footprints could be found. Could it have been a figment of their imaginations or even their nerves playing tricks on them? One of them said later that it must have been the spirit of the murdered slave. They never saw the legless lamb again, but they somehow felt that the slave had managed to come back to thank them for helping him on that fateful day when he was killed.

SOURCE: Henry Allen
Williamston, N.C.

Jakie Bob and Ernestine often sat along the water's edge talking with one another.

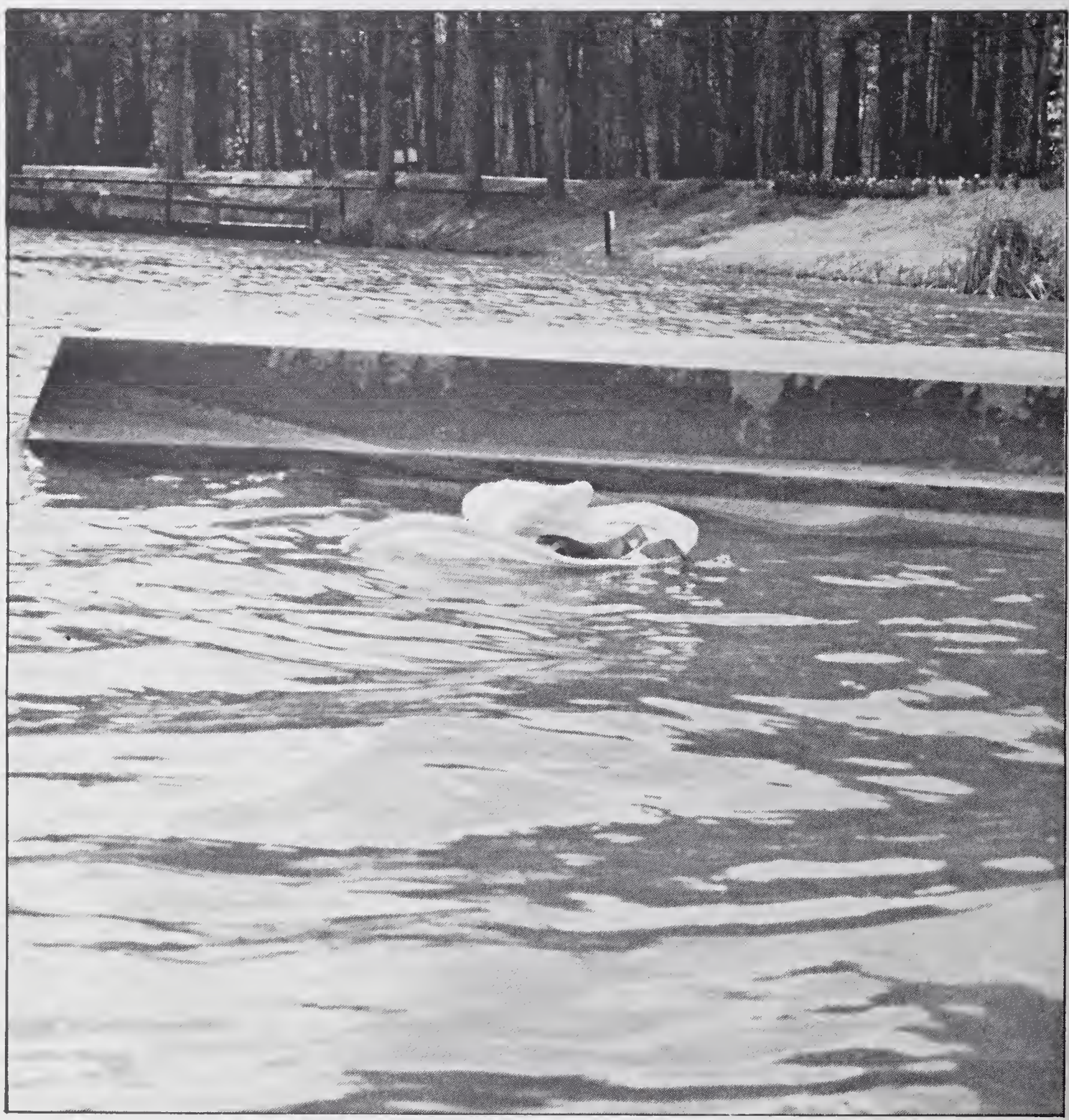
"THE LEGEND OF JAKIE BOB AND ERNESTINE"
by
Donald Russell

There have been many mysterious stories told about a certain mill pond in Martin County. Probably the most interesting one however, is the one about Jakie Bob and Ernestine.

Jakie Bob and Ernestine lived in Martin County in the late 1800's. They were very much in love, but since their parents objected to their seeing one another, they had to meet secretly. They had planned a secret rendezvous on the Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October. Since the weather was so pleasant, they had planned to take their canoe and go out for a ride on the millpond.

Ernestine went to the pond earlier to wait for her lover.

Since it was not customary for young women to be seen alone with a young man in such a place as this, Ernestine had gone to the pond earlier to wait in the boat for Jakie Bob. While she was sitting there waiting for him, the boat overturned by accident, dumping her into the pond. She couldn't swim and began struggling to grab hold of something. Jakie Bob, who had just ridden up on his horse, heard her scream for help and he began riding at full speed to go to her rescue. Just as he got to the pond, his horse tripped, throwing him into a tree. His arm was horribly mangled, but in spite of the pain, he dragged himself to the pond looking for some sign of Ernestine. He was too late however, and only the overturned boat and her hat remained at the scene. Her body was never found.



The boat overturned dumping her into the pond.

After Jakie Bob's fall, his mangled arm had to be amputated.

Jakie Bob, who was heartbroken, refused to leave the edge of the pond until Ernestine's body could be found. His arm worsened and gangrene set in. Something had to be done, so his family called the doctor from a nearby town to come and do what he could for Jakie Bob. When the doctor arrived and looked at the arm, he knew that the arm must be removed. Afraid to move him, the doctor set up a makeshift operating table and using a hack-saw, amputated his arm.

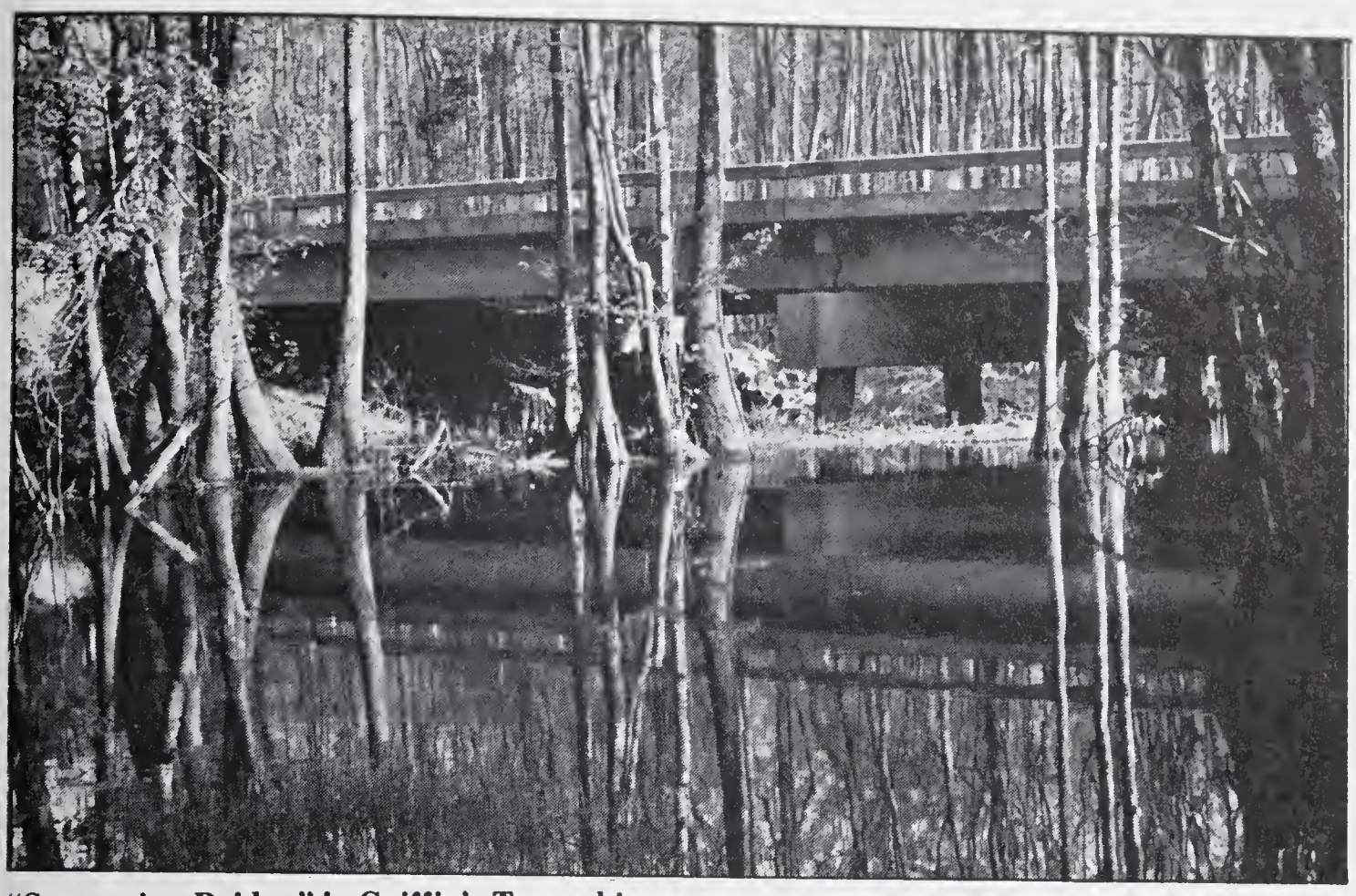
Through his pain and agony, Jakie Bob became delirious and began pitifully calling for Ernestine and his arm. The next day the neighbors buried the arm in a nearby graveyard, and a few days later Jakie Bob died and was buried in the lot next to his arm.

One can't say for sure that the old graveyard is haunted, but strange lights have been seen moving along over the graves of Jakie Bob and his arm. Even more strange, just last year a couple of beavers built a dam at the same site where Ernestine drowned and then mysteriously abandoned it shortly afterward. Perhaps Jakie Bob has found Ernestine and his arm after all!

SOURCE: Tim Malone
Bear Grass Township

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

A beautiful girl can often be seen sitting on cypress knee in the swamp.



"Screaming Bridge" in Griffin's Township.

"THE LEGEND OF THE SCREAMING BRIDGE"
by
Daniel Coffield

In the 18th century, there was a prominent family by the name of Yarrell living in Martin County. They lived near a bridge that crossed Sweetened Water Creek. During the Civil War, one of the Yarrell girls was mysteriously drowned in the creek bordering her family homeplace. No one knew for sure if she had accidentally drowned, if she had committed suicide, or if she had been murdered. There was never any clue to the cause of her death, but on certain moonless nights people crossing the bridge said they could hear the moans and screams from an unseen woman. Sometimes they said they could even see a beautiful girl sitting on a cypress knee off in the distance. She was pictured as being very lovely, but having a very sad expression on her face as if she were deeply grieved over something. For this reason, the people of the community felt that she had truly died in a violent manner. She died with her secret, but maybe you can visit "Screaming Bridge" one night and find out for yourself what really happened to her!

SOURCE: Tradition

The mysterious rider appeared on the track dressed all in black, riding a coal black horse.

"THE PHANTOM RIDER"
by
Jay Fulford

Back in the 1800's in Martin County, there was an old race track on the banks of the Roanoke River. Horse racing was a favorite sport of the men at this time, and the races were usually held during the week. Occasionally however, one was scheduled on a Sunday. Of course, there was a lot of criticism about this, and it was generally frowned upon by the people of the community.

One Sunday when the race was going full swing, a mysterious rider appeared on the track, almost as if he had appeared from nowhere. He was dressed all in black and was riding a coal black horse. He passed all the other contestants as if they were standing still, and all the while he was laughing a fiendish laugh. Even though he actually won the race, he didn't stay long enough to claim the prize money but just rode off toward the woods.

The crowds of people were amazed and terrified. Many of them said he looked like the Devil himself with that fiendish look on his face. Others of them were certain that it *must* have been the Devil, since they were breaking the Sabbath Day by racing. They felt that he had come to claim their souls for his own. Some of the skeptical ones said that it was only a young boy playing a prank on them. Just to be on the safe side however, they went home in a hurry with all the other believers, and it is said that there was never a race held on Sunday again as long as the racetrack existed!

SOURCE: Tradition

An advertisement from a 1907 Williamston Enterprise

"A BABY CRIED IN THE NIGHT"
(as told by Peggy Bailey)

"During the year of 1935 we lived in the Everetts community. This was about six miles from my mother's birthplace in Bear Grass township. We were just beginning to overcome the very severe depression of the early thirties. Times were still hard; families were very close as a result of this since there was little traveling away from immediate areas. There were the usual family Sunday dinners where all the married children, their husbands, wives and children came home to ' "Mammy's" '.

All the family was involved in farming, some on the homeplace, some as tenants on neighboring farms and some as day workers for anyone needing labor. With pay very low, good nourishing food was hard to come by. The women and children came down with pellagra, a disease brought on by malnutrition. Men weakened and became sick as a result of poor diet, hard work in inclement weather and despair over their seeming helplessness in the face of the great depression.

During the month of March, just as the winter was ending and the spring offered new hope for all concerned, Willie, one of the older boys, was taken sick. He had been the one to look after the family cow, seeing that she was put out to pasture each day and brought back in at night. The milk from this cow was shared by three families; Mammy's, the matriarch of the family, which consisted of two unmarried daughters, one unmarried son, a married son, his wife, and some grandchildren; a married sister's family, and Willie's. The other six children were married and living in their own homes.

The pasture lay just beyond sister Annie's home. Each day as Willie left the cow he would go by Annie's home. He had a special knock he used and the family knew just when to expect it. They would invite him in and they would visit together before he returned to the other chores of the day.

Willie's illness grew worse as the March days crept by. He lost his vigor, and the sparkle in his eye dimmed as the disease raged in his body. Mammy and Aunt Penny worried aloud and their concern communicated itself to the other family members.

Viola, a daughter who lived in Everetts, (my mother) had a strange experience at her home during this time. She and her family were in bed, sound asleep. There came a loud noise on the porch and a great knock at the front door. My father was startled awake. He jumped up and in his fright cried 'What's going on out there?' He ran to the door, threw it open, ready to defend his family against any threat. He was completely baffled when he could not find anyone, or anything that could have caused the knocking. He went back in and told the family there was no one there. They slept no more that night.

The next day Mammy sent one of the children to Everetts to see if Viola could come to Bear Grass to help her and Aunt Penny take care of Uncle Willie. She packed up her things, and the whole family was moved to the family homestead for this crisis.

Willie grew worse; no medicine helped and a feeling of despair settled on the family. They all remembered that Willie and Penny had lost a baby to the grim reaper earlier and their hearts were heavy when they thought of Aunt Penny having to face losing a loved one again so soon.

Night fell and weary brothers and sisters settled down for a restless night of sleep. The silence was heavy, and the night dark. A high, crying sound penetrated the darkness. The family was awakened; they arose and listened intently. What was it? Mammy took a lamp, went to the front door, opened it and listened. It was a baby's crying. it began at the edge of Annie's yard, moved down the road, on across the plowed field, toward the family cemetery and when it reached the cemetery stopped.

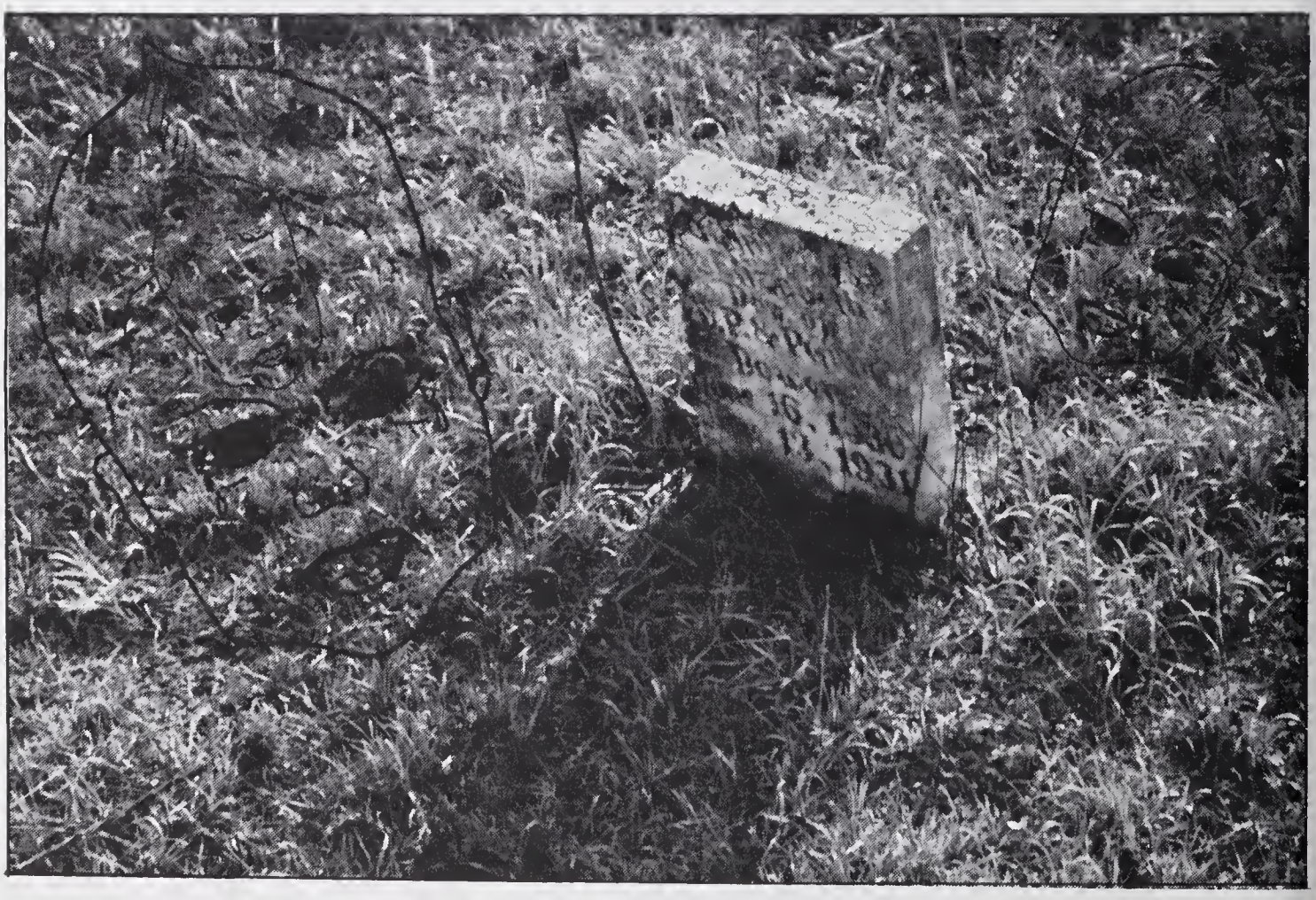
The family was stunned by these strange sounds. They talked about the events and wondered aloud what they

could mean. Finally, to console the anxious children and to settle their own nerves they crept one by one back to bed.

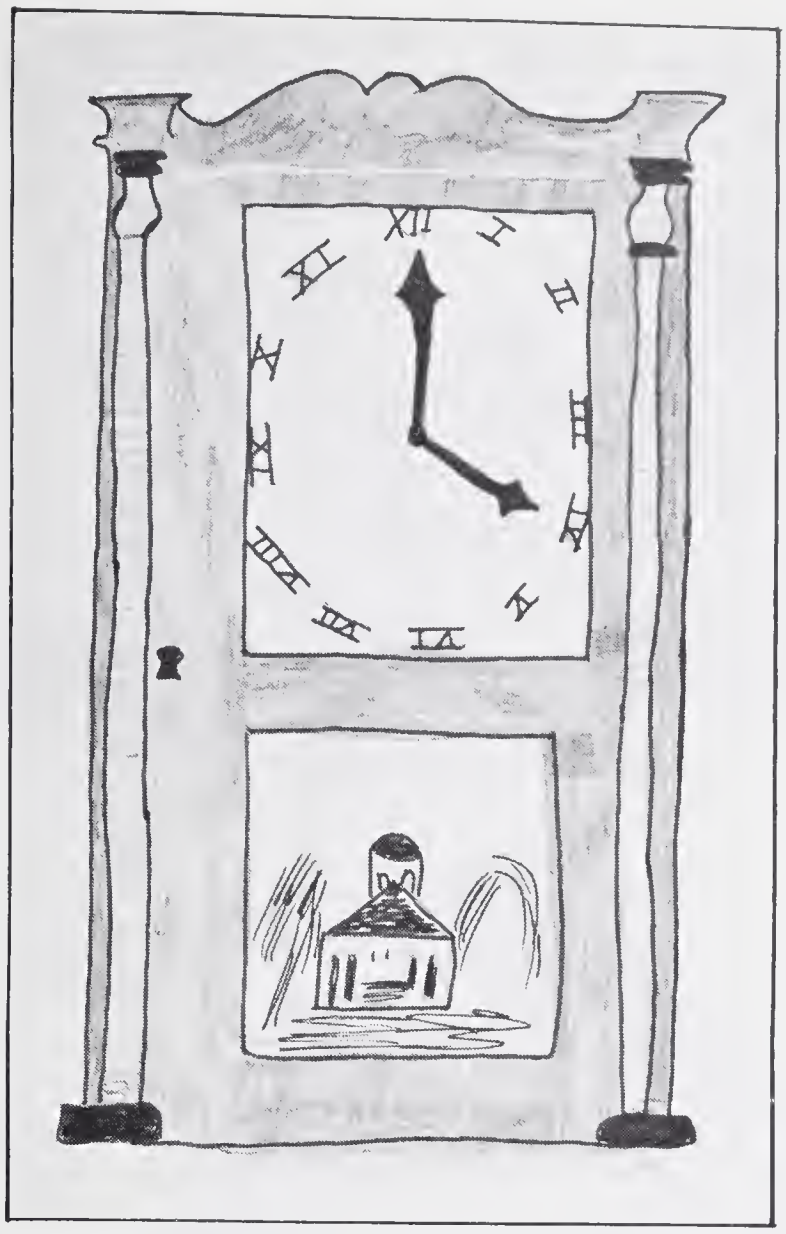
Just as they began to drift back to sleep the same loud noise and knocking sounded just as it did in the Mobley home in Everetts just a few nights previously. The adults sprang up to see what was going on. The rapping continued and when Mammy answered the door, she was greeted by a member of Willie's family. They were told that Willie had passed away just a short time ago.

It all began to fall in place for the bereaved family. The knocking in Everetts was a premonition of Willie's death. The baby's crying was that of the baby the family lost recently who was searching for his father at the home of Willie's sister. The baby came to accompany his father to the family graveyard, crying all the way. As soon as they arrived at the cemetery, the crying stopped. Willie gave up the ghost, left this world, took up residence with his deceased son. The crying baby was never heard again. He had found his father."

SOURCE: Peggy Bailey
Bear Grass Township



The crying baby finally found his father.



"TRUMPETS AT 4 O'CLOCK"
by
Deborah Price
(as told by Mamie Roberson)

"My granddaddy was a preacher before he died. The night he died he told everyone that St. Peter had told him he was coming to get him at 4 o'clock sharp. The people in his room told him not to think about it. Secretly they thought he was going mad, saying that he was going to die and that he knew at exactly what time he was going.

A man by the name of Frank Wells was sitting on the edge of the bed holding granddaddy's hand when suddenly granddaddy sat up straight and said, "He's coming! Get ready. I hear St. Peter's trumpets."

Everyone got quiet. An echoing noise came through the room. It was 3:59. At 4 o'clock sharp he died!"

SOURCE: Mamie Roberson
Jamesville, N.C.

Derek Price

"THE FORTUNE TELLER AND HER CAT"
by
Jeremiah Taylor

(This story was told by Mr. Robert Price as a true experience he had years ago.)

A long time ago, there used to be five or six little white houses in back of the Martin County Home for the Aged, but in the past several years they have all been torn down.

An old lady lived in one of these houses with a big black cat. She had a name for being able to put spells on people and it was said that she could also tell your fortune. One day the old lady died and that night several people came to her house to "sit up" with the body. In those days, people would sit up all night with the corpse.

After everyone got to her house that night, they were upset by the fact that there by her casket lay her big black cat just watching her! It seemed like such a strange thing to be happening that they all became uneasy just wondering what the cat would do. But all the cat did was to sit there just staring. Some of them tried to run the cat out of the house but would turn around and find the cat lying right back in the same spot, staring at the fortune teller, and making a mournful wailing sound.

Finally, the girls became afraid and decided to run the cat out and slam the door before it could get back in. This didn't work however, for when they looked around, there was the cat lying in the same spot, crying and staring at the woman. They even tried propping the door shut from the inside, but that didn't work either.

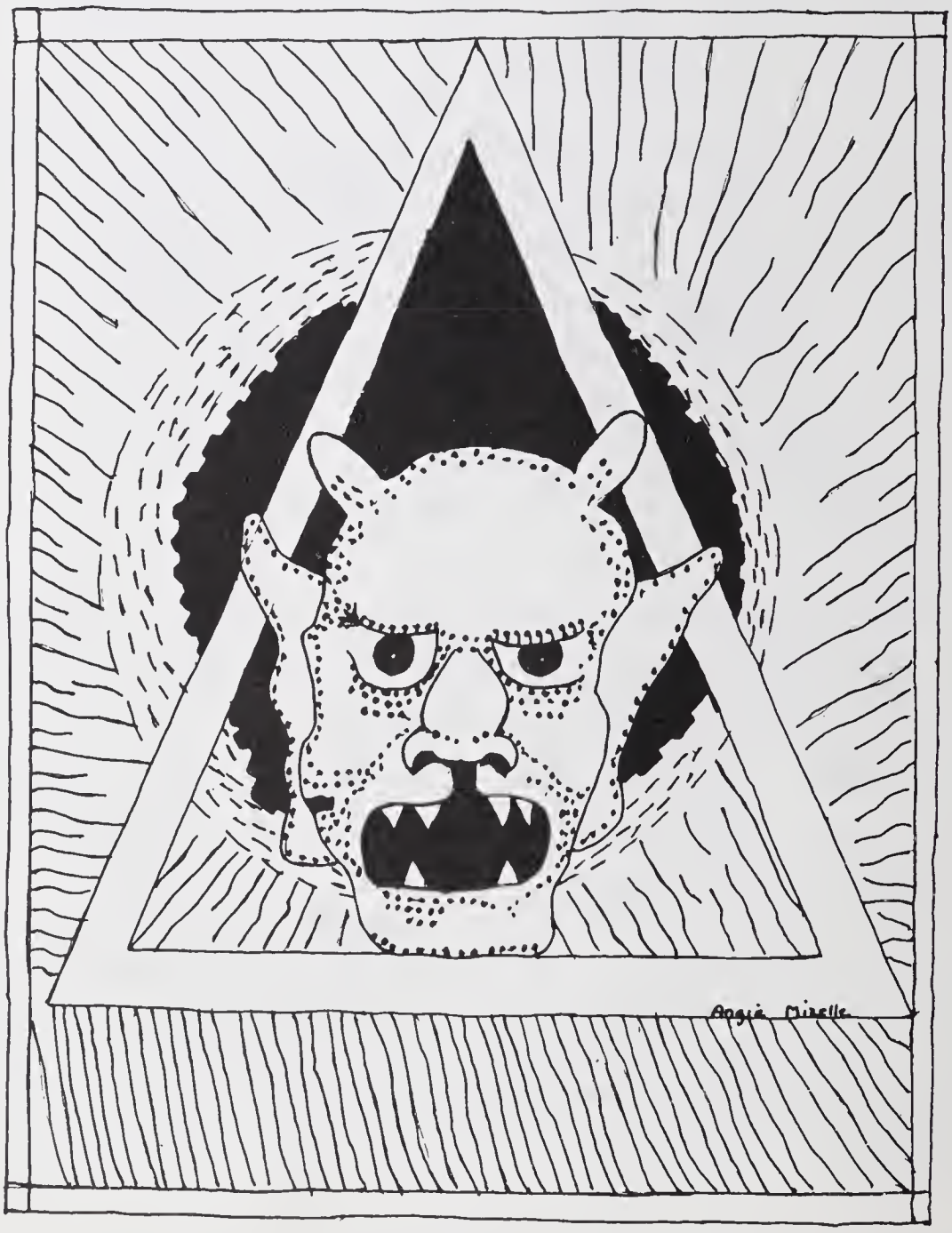
Mr. Price and some of his friends decided to go to the owner of the house, get the key, and lock the door. After getting the key they went back across the field to the woman's house and as they got closer to the house they could hear the others talking about the big black cat and how strange it was acting.

When they got back to the house, they ran the cat out of the house, locked the door, and nailed sticks over all the windows. They felt sure that the cat couldn't get in the house now and they took their lanterns and went to sit on the porch.

Around one o'clock in the morning, they decided to go inside to see if everything was all right. When they unlocked the front door, they saw the big black cat lying in the same spot, watching the fortune teller and making the same mournful sound. Unable to believe their eyes, they quickly checked all the windows and found the sticks still nailed in place. With this turn of events, they were all chilled to the bone with fear.

The next day the woman was buried near the house and during the funeral there was no sign of the cat anywhere. People who passed by the grave several days later were shocked to find an open grave where the woman had been buried. From the marks in the soft earth around the grave, it looked as if a cat or something with sharp claws had scratched the grave open. There was no sign of the fortune teller's body and the big black cat was never seen again.

SOURCE: Robert Price
Williamston, N.C.



Photograph by Jim L. Dees

"THE SECRET IN THE WELL"
by
Deborah Price
(as told by her grandmother, Mamie Roberson)

Many years ago old Doc Ward lived with his two daughters way back in a big white house on the road between Williamston and Jamesville.

One night a boy named Bill Walker and his brother Roy came calling on Doc Ward's oldest daughter. Bill was really the one who was courting her, but he brought Roy along since he didn't want to go home alone on the long lonesome road between their houses.

After spending a nice evening at the Ward home, the boys got ready to leave. Just as they were going out the door, Doc called Bill around to the backyard and told Roy to wait for him in the front yard. After a few minutes, Roy started calling for Bill. It was getting late and he knew that they should be off the road before it got any later. Just as he called, he saw a horse running from the backyard. About the same time, Doc Ward came around the house and told him that Bill had already left to go home. Roy was furious and just couldn't believe Bill would leave him to walk home alone, particularly since he had brought him along just for company.

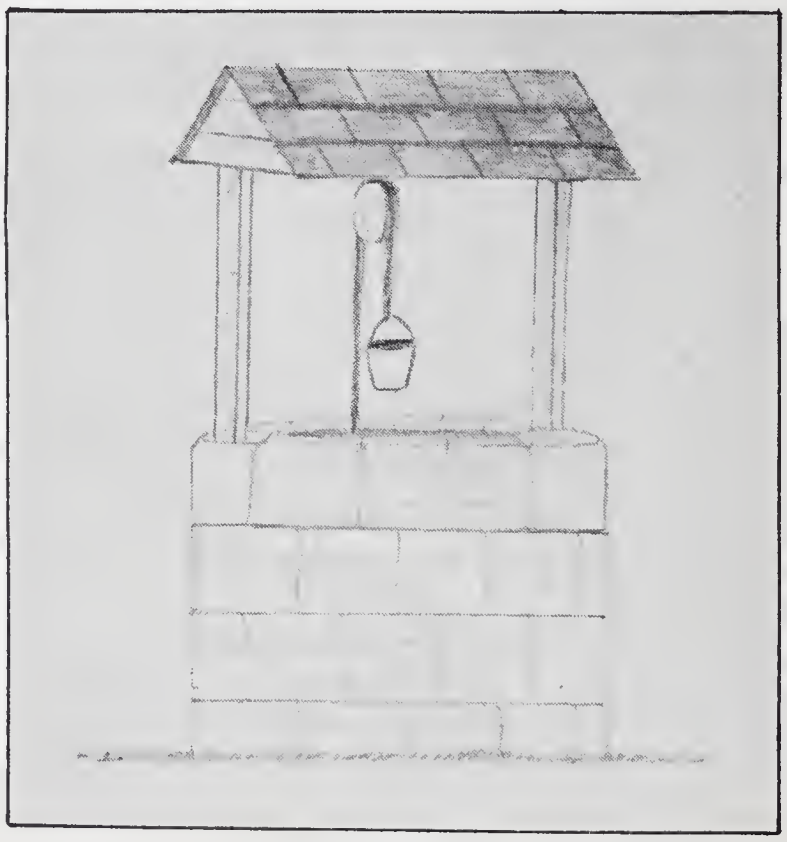
When he got home there was no sign of Bill or his horse. After a couple of days Roy was really beginning to worry about Bill's whereabouts and he decided to go back to old Doc's house to look for him. It was night when he arrived at the house and as he called Bill's name, a horse and rider came running around the house. They appeared so suddenly that it startled Roy and as the horse and rider got closer he thought it was Bill. It seemed to look like him, but still it didn't. The rider seemed to be almost like a shadow of Bill, but still Roy spoke to him and said, "We've been lookin' for you, Bill. Where in the world have you been?" The rider paused for a moment, stared right into Roy's eyes and then took off like a light down the road.

Roy was very upset by these events and ran home and told his daddy about the strange happening at the Ward place. The two of them went back to Doc's house and the same thing occurred again just as they got to the well in the yard.

The next week they found Bill's body floating in Doc Ward's well, but by that time Doc had long since moved away!

For a long time after that the people around there declared that on certain moonless nights you could see a headless horseman riding 'round and 'round the house!

SOURCE: Mamie Roberson
Jamesville, N.C.



"THE MONEY ROD"
by
Darlene Griffin
(as told by Orlando Brown)

"Late one night back around 1935, the moon was shining brightly when the members of the Brown family went out to hunt for money. They carried a "money rod", a shovel, and a stick.

They had heard tell of some money that was buried back of Hickory Grove Church and they wanted to find it. When they got behind the church they drew a big circle around the spot where they believed the money to be. They picked this particular spot since the money rod had told them where to dig. After digging for a long time, the shovel hit something hard like a metal box. Just as it did, they looked up and saw "hants", bears, lions, spirits, and all kinds of ugly faces around them. They even heard the sound of a train crossing the road. It scared them so bad that they yelled out and as they did the money went back into the ground. Just as it disappeared into the ground the spirits around them went away and all the sounds they had heard were gone.

When all of this happened, the Browns took off running leaving their money rod, shovel, and all. They didn't never come back there and look for money again!"

NOTE: There have been numerous stories about the money rod and it seems to be some kind of metal rod that is magnetized in a way that it points to the ground where money is buried. When you have found the place to dig all the people in the group must hold hands in a circle to keep the evil spirits from coming up with the money. Another thing that you must never do is to talk for if you do while the money is emerging from the ground, it will go back into the earth. Others have told us that you must also have clean hands and clean clothes on when you go searching for money this way.

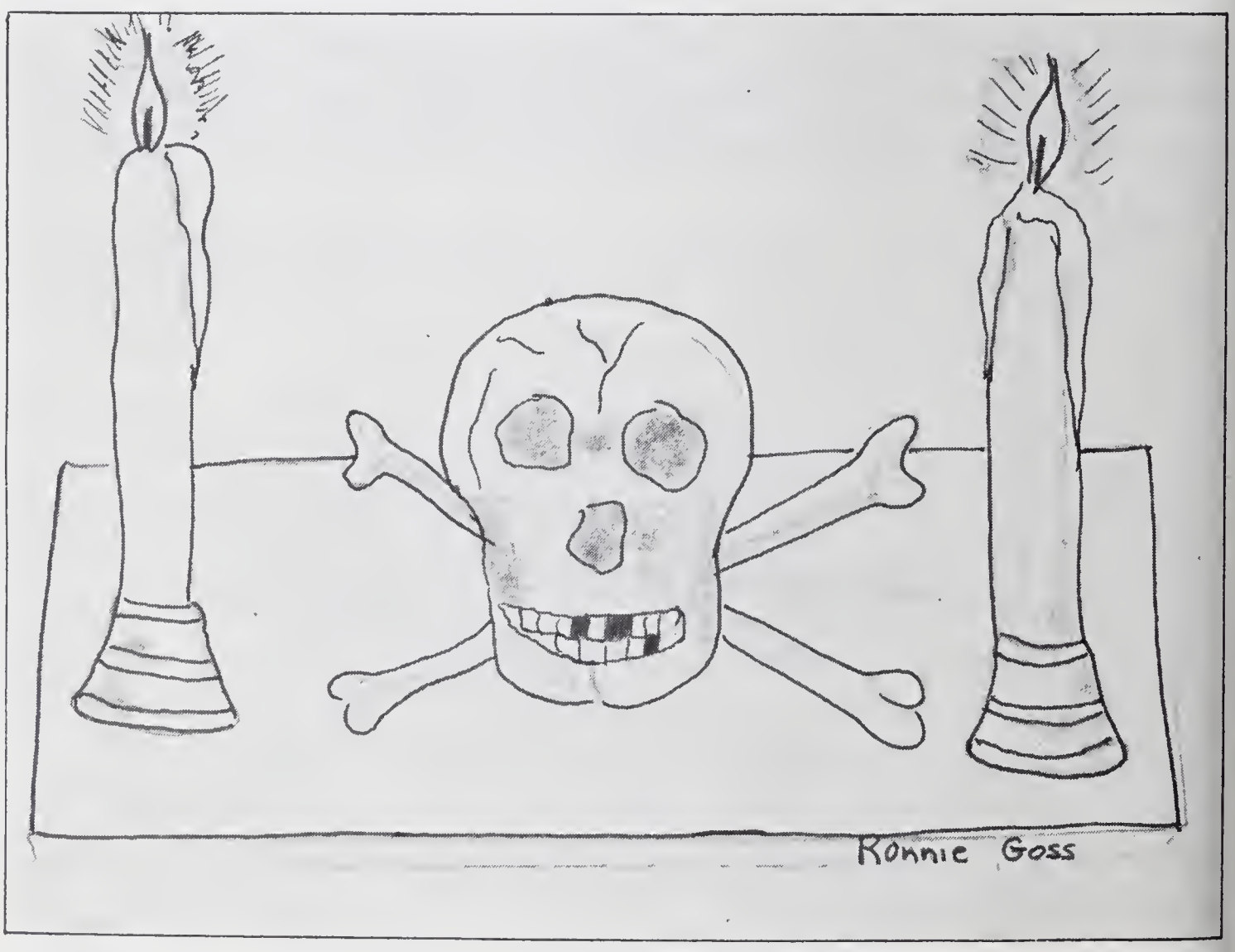
"THE CAVE OF THE MURDERED SLAVES"
as told by Henry Allen

"There used to be a spring out between Everetts and Williamston near where Memorial Gardens is today called Sparkman Springs. It bubbled out of the ground near a cave in a clay bank nearby. There was an old man who lived near the cave that would go to different places to steal horses. He would bring them back to this cave until he could find a place to sell them. He usually sold them in Tarboro or Plymouth.

It was said that he had slaves to help him drive the horses home after stealing them and that he would sometimes kill the slaves to keep them from telling on him.

Nobody ever proved this but, many folks around there told of seeing strange lights, and hearing strange noises around this cave many years after the old man had died.

SOURCE: Henry Allen



STORIES TOLD BY SIMON GARDNER
to
John Peele and Douglas Harrison

"There's a house back there near Mottie-Belle's house everyone used to call Ruthy's Place. In the kitchen there was a door that they never could keep shut- overnight or while they were away for the day. They'd close the door at night and come back in the morning and it'd be open. A few times they tried nailing it shut. The next morning it'd be open again! And at the same house people could hear horses running around the house. One night they heard the horses and ran out on the porch and saw lights going around the house. They couldn't see the horses, but they could hear them.

Something that happened to me one time really scared me. Coming home from Everetts on the Bailey Road one night I was shocked when I looked up and saw three lights. They didn't glare like a flashlight and they didn't look like fire. They were just three balls of light. They looked like they were about thirty feet above a building and they just went straight up separating themselves about a second to two seconds apart. Sometime the next summer I heard there was a killing on that road right about where I saw the lights!"

SOURCE: Simon Gardner
Bear Grass Township

"THE DEATH CHAIR"
by
John Peele and Douglas Harrison
(as told by Magnolia Bailey)

"There is a little country store in Bear Grass known as 'Mottie-Belle's'. It is the gathering place for many of the townspeople where they come to sit around and talk. There used to be an old chair that set right in the middle of the store and it was kind of reserved for my brother when he would come in for a visit.

One day he entered the hospital with a minor pain in his back and much to the surprise of everyone in the community, he died. No one was ever able to give a satisfactory reason for his untimely death.

After his death, other people began sitting in the chair and very unexpectedly, one of them died also. Everyone said at first that it was just a coincidence that both of these men who had been regular sitters in the chair died of unknown causes, but after that time several other people who regularly sat in the chair died also.

Finally the chair was moved to the back of the store where it rests today. No one in the Bear Grass area who knows the story of the chair will sit in it and it is now known as 'The Death Chair'."

SOURCE: Magnolia Bailey
Bear Grass Township

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

Mottie-Belle's store in Bear Grass

"A DEATH MESSAGE"
by
Lisa Davenport

One night a farmer and his wife had been visiting friends in Martin County. They returned home early and soon retired for the night. During the night they were awakened by a loud noise. The bedroom light flashed on and off. This happened three times.

They made a thorough search of the house but could find nothing. They finally fell asleep, but still had this strange occurrence on their minds.

In the morning they talked about what had happened the night before and decided that it must have been the sign of bad news. Later that day someone came to the house and handed them a note. It said that the wife's father had passed away and he had died at exactly the same time that they had been awakened the night before!

SOURCE: Sally Davenport
Williamston, N.C.

"Death of Twins"

"My mother once told me about this lady here in Martin County that had twins. One of them died and a few days later when she went to a spring for some water, the image of her dead child appeared to her and said that he had come for his brother. Sure enough, that very night the other twin died, and a strange light was seen moving across the yard into the family cemetery beside the house.

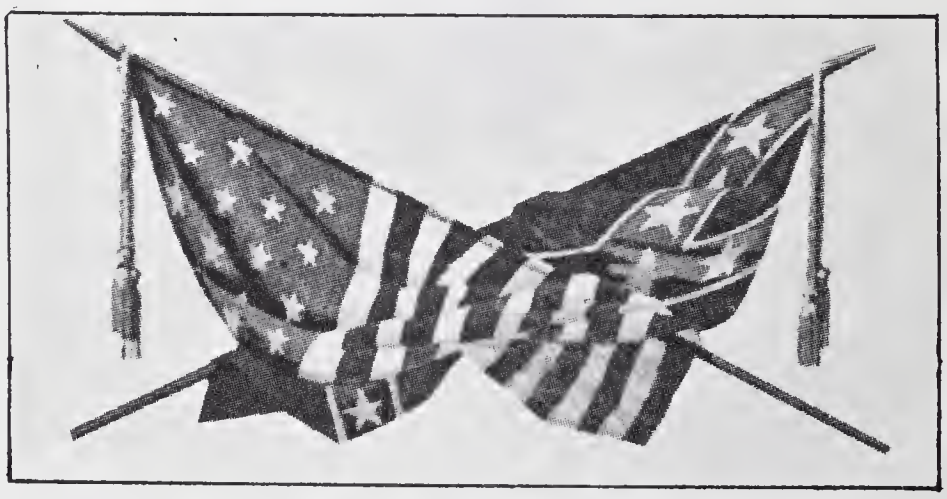
SOURCE: Henry Allen
Williamston, N.C.

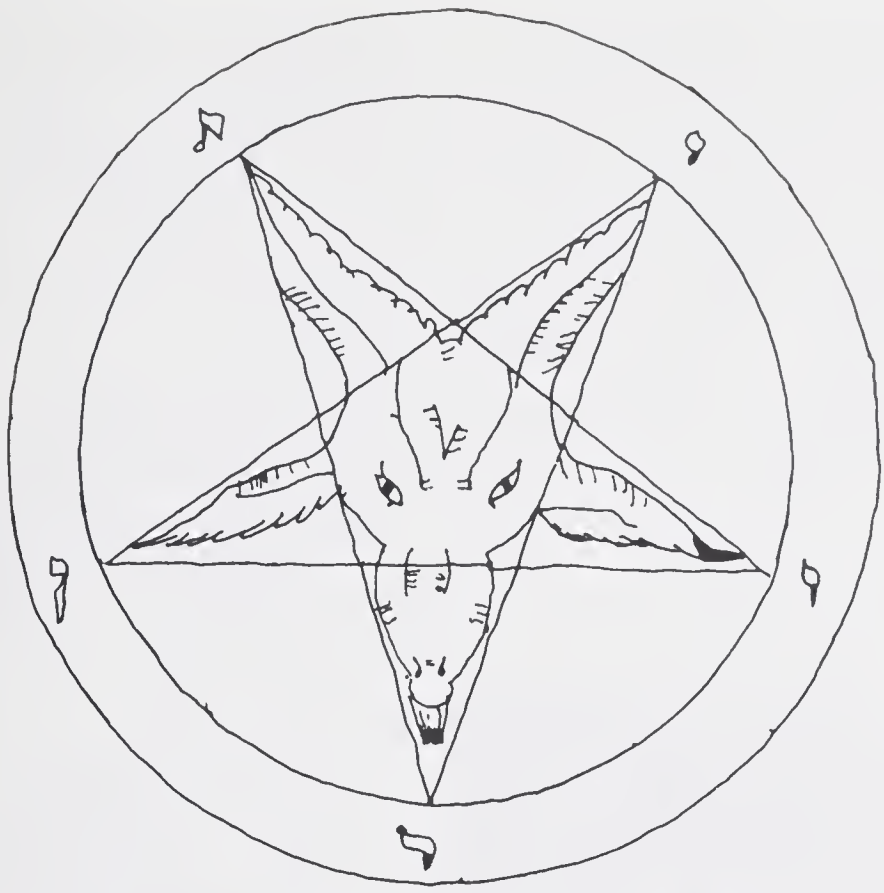
"THE GHOSTS OF THE SLAIN YANKEE SOLDIERS"
told by Henry Allen

The old Yarrell house that burned last year had something weird happen there a long time ago. Harry and John Keeter, well known characters in the area, who had fought in the Civil War, were said to be afraid of nothing. They got in a lot of fights and a few people in the area would challenge them.

The two boys rented a room in the Yarrell house. One night they started up the stairs and saw a lot of clothes lying on the steps. They began to fuss at the lady of the house for leaving them on the steps where they might have tripped and fallen over them. As they bent down to pick the clothes up, they were startled to see that the pile of clothes were actually blue Yankee uniforms. As they reached for them, their hands went right through them and the uniforms disappeared altogether! It was at that moment they remembered the stories that had been told of the Yankee soldiers who had died while imprisoned in the cellar of the house!

SOURCE: Henry Allen
Williamston, N.C.





"THE WITCH OF BEAR GRASS"
by
Sharon Hodges and Lisa Gurkin

In the mid 1800's, the belief in witches was abundant all over the country. The minds of everyone were filled with "hants" and witches, and imaginations ran especially wild in the small farming communities all around Martin County.

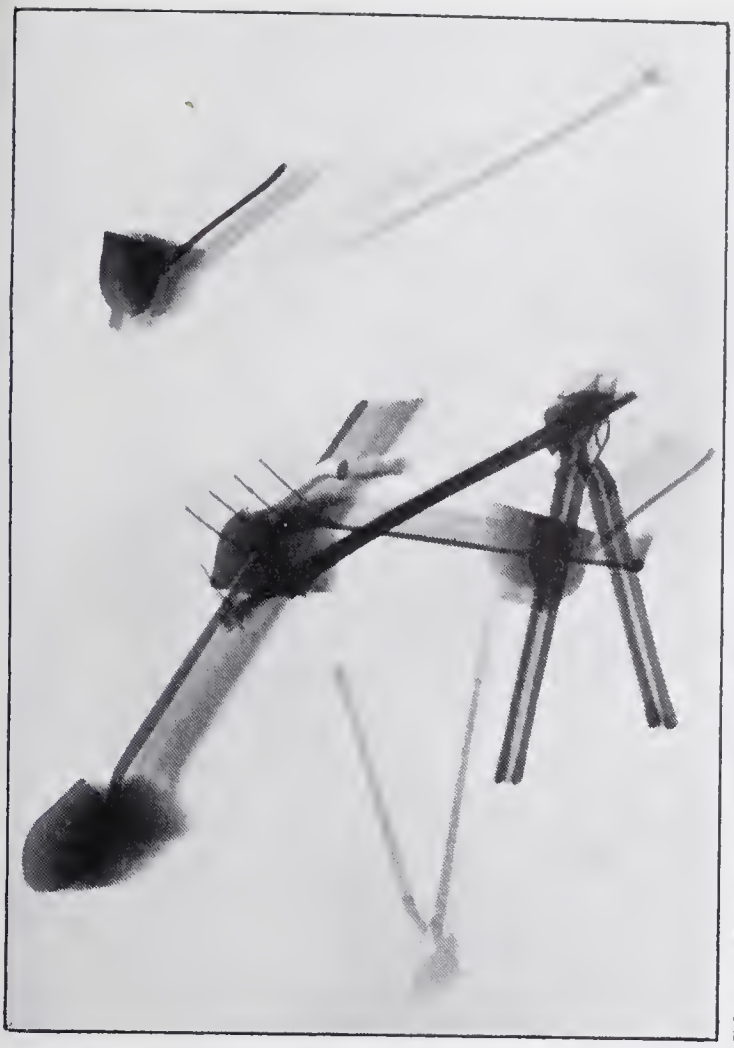
There were several different people in Martin County who were accused of being witches. Among them were Emily Martin, who was known for riding farmers' horses all night long and before dawn, plaiting their manes and tails. Another so-called witch was Marina Hudson, a resident of Williamston. She was known for her great beauty, but oddly enough, she never married. To many people, this was conclusive proof of one's being a witch! As time passed however, she stopped caring about her appearance and became slovenly and dirty. After this happened, everyone was sure that their suspicions about her had been correct.

The most famous witch of all was old Liddy Mizell of Bear Grass. She lived on the old Synchom Place, which in itself boasted of strange happenings. Liddy was a strange old lady with a mind of her own. The people in Bear Grass always gave her house a wide path when passing anywhere in the area.

Liddy lived next to William Mizell's farm. It isn't known if they were kin or not, but some seem to think they were. The two of them quarreled all the time about one thing or another, but their biggest argument was over a plot of ground where Liddy planted her garden. This seemed to be a habit of hers, since she was known to have taken over land belonging to other people in the same way. The others were too scared to say anything to her about it for fear she would put a terrible curse on them, but not so with William! He was just as stubborn as Liddy, and he told her to get off his land that he wasn't going to put up with her foolishness like all the others had. This made Liddy so

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

Liddy and William quarreled about where she would plant her garden.



Photograph by Jim L. Dees

William's farming implements would go sailing through the air.

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

He would find broken dishes lying on the floor.

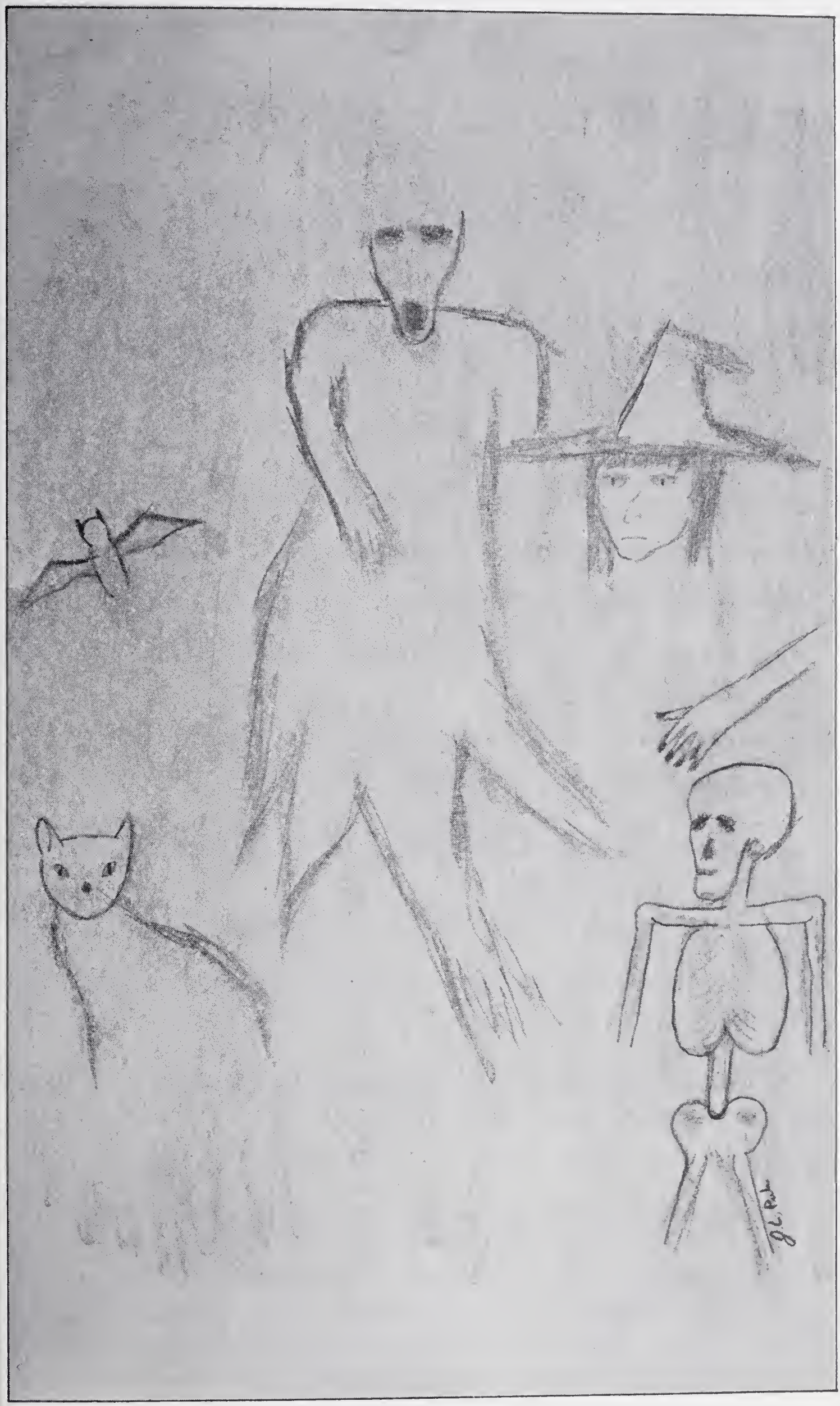
angry that she said, "If you don't leave me alone, I will haunt you "till your dying day." Surprisingly enough, in just two weeks Liddy did die! No one was really certain of the cause of death, but it was supposed it was due to her old age. At any rate, soon after her death strange things began to happen on William's farm. His farming implements, such as hoes, rakes, and shovels would go sailing across the yard without the touch of human hands. Sometimes William would hear strange noises during the night. Other times he would come in the house after working in the fields all day to find broken dishes lying on the floor in the kitchen.

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

William hammered an iron stake into Liddy's grave, ending her mischief.

These unexplained incidents occurred for several weeks when finally William could stand it no more. He knew now that Liddy had made good her threat to haunt him, and that the only way to break the curse was to drive an iron stake through her heart. Late one dark, eerie night William made his way to Liddy's grave and figuring as best he could where her heart would be, jammed the iron stake in the ground and began to hammer it deeply into the grave. He wasn't sure if it was just his imagination playing tricks on him or not, but he said he heard a deep sigh as the stake penetrated the tomb. He wasn't sure if the stake had found its mark or not, but one thing he was sure of, from that day on he was never bothered again by the witch's "conjurations"!

SOURCE: Tradition



CURES AND REMEDIES

SORE THROAT

Rub throat with turpentine

Take a piece of paper, make a cone of it and blow a mixture of black pepper, sulfur, and alum into the person's throat.

Drink syrup made from red oak bark.

Use a poultice made of hot tar and wrap around the person's neck.

Use a poultice made of corn meal, salt, black pepper and turpentine.

BLEEDING

Pour kerosene on the wound.

To stop bleeding, take spider webs and soot from the chimney and put on wound.

EARACHE

To cure the earache put a teaspoon of white lightning in the ear.

Mix the sap from the persimmon tree with warm water and put 2 or 3 drops in your ear.

COLDS

Mix melted honey with whiskey and drink 2 spoonsfull.

Make poultice of mustard, turpentine, whiskey, and kerosene. Put this on your chest for a chest cold.

Boil tips of pine branches and drink liquid for a bad cold.

STINGS

For a wasp sting, make a poultice of snuff and water and put it on the sting to draw the poison out and to make the pain go away.

NERVES

To cure a jittery stomach, take the hair of a dog that has bitten you, wet it, and put it on your stomach.

HICCOUGHS

If you want to get rid of the "hiccups", the best thing to do is to go out and catch a "toady frog" and put it in your house. When the frog jumps out of the house, it'd take your hiccups with 'im. O' course if you got a stubborn "toady frog" and he don't want to go out the door, your hiccups might just go by themselves out the door. .

TOOTHACHE

Rub a mixture of camphor and white lightning on gums to relieve toothache.

CUTS

For small cuts and scratches, put a small amount of kerosene and beef tallow on them.

Use mixture of balsam and kerosene on cut.

BOILS

Use a piece of fat back pork to draw the boil to a head.

BURNS

Mix "dirt daubers" nests with honey and apply to the burn.

WARTS

The juice of the milkweed plant will make warts go away.

To get rid of warts, walk outside when the moon is full, pick up a handfull of dirt, rub it on the warts, and then throw the dirt at the moon. For the rest of the night you can't look at the moon. Do this three nights in a row when the moon is full.

POISON IVY

Sulfur and clorox stops the itching and dries up the rash.

ARTHRITIS

Honey should be taken daily for arthritis

SPRAINS

Make a paste of "dirt dauber's nests" and vinegar. Add a little salt to this and use on a sprained ankle.

Rub with mixture of camphor and "white lightning"

COLIC

Catnip tea cures a baby of colic

TONIC

Take the root of the may apple plant and brown it in the oven. When it is dry, pulverize the root and mix with water. Take ½ spoonful of this for a spring tonic to cleanse the body of any impurities.

USES FOR SASSAFRAS ROOT

Sassafras tea purifies the blood.

Sassafras tea will cure the measles.

SUPERSTITIONS

GOOD LUCK SIGNS

On New Year's Day, it is good luck for a man to be the first to enter your house, but bad luck for a woman to enter first.

You will have good luck if you eat blackeyed peas and hog jowl on New Year's Day.

If you find a penny, pick if up if it shows heads, but if it shows tails, leave it where it is.

A wish made on the new moon will come true only if you make it while looking over your left shoulder.

Children born at chime hours (3, 6, 9, 12) are supposed to be blessed with "second sight" and will have unusual psychic powers.

A black cat crossing from left to right brings good luck if it happens at night.

When you see a white mule, lick the thumb on your right hand, make a fist of your right hand and hit it in the palm of your left hand. As you do this, make a wish and it is supposed to come true.

For good luck, on the first day of every month, you're supposed to turn a flip on your bed and yell, "Jack rabbit" without touching the floor that night after getting into bed.

DEATH

If a rooster crows after sundown, somebody is going to die within 2 days.

If you hear a loud ringing called the "death bell", in your ear it means somebody is going to die soon.

If you drop a dishrag by mistake, it means somebody is going to die in your family.

If you wash sheets between Christmas and New Year's Day, someone will die on those sheets.

Don't sweep under a bed when someone is sick or they will die.

Never wear anything new to a funeral because you'll never live long enough to wear it out.

If when you're pregnant you buy a lot of unnecessary things, the baby will die young.

If you stand in someone's shadow, it means you will die soon.

If a rooster crows between sunset and dark it's a sign of a death in the family.

If an azalea blooms in December someone close to you will die.

If a picture falls off the wall there will be a death in the family.

WEATHER

If you hear it thunder in the wintertime, it is going to snow within 7 days.

If you want to make it rain, hang a dead snake up on a tree limb.

If it rains before seven, it will stop before eleven.

The number of fogs in August will be the number of snows in January.

When the moon tilts it will rain; if it's straight it won't rain.

If you dream about someone who's dead, it will probably rain.

If the sun is shining while it is raining, it means that it will rain the next day also.

MONEY

If your right hand itches, you will receive money. If you left hand itches, you will pay money out.

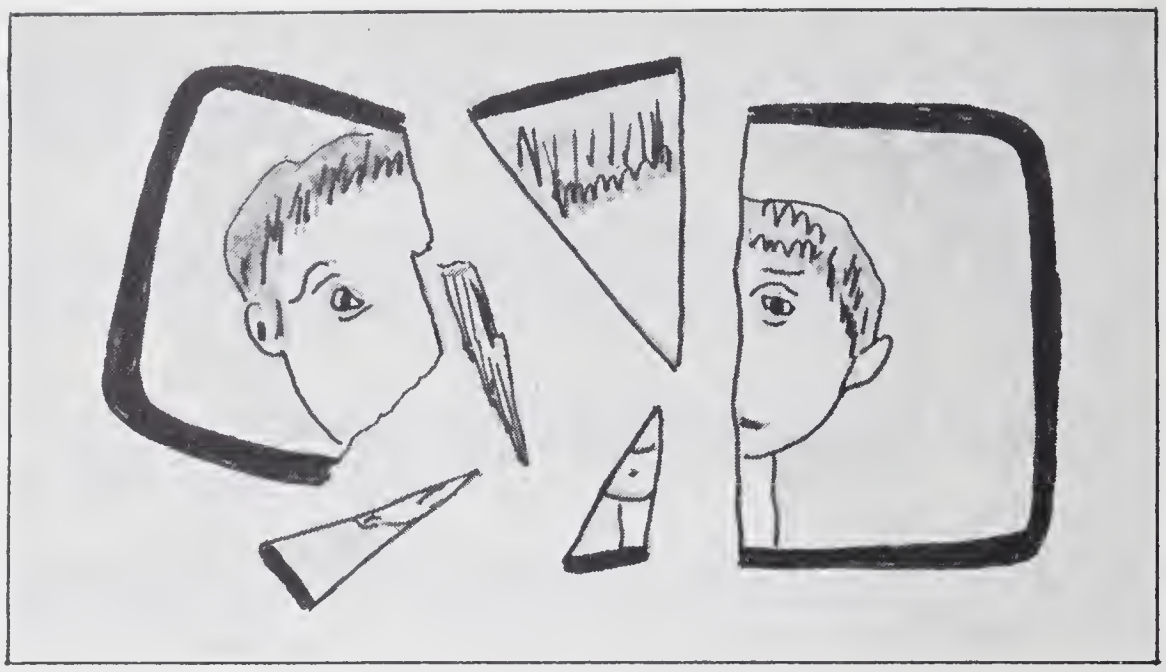
Bubbles in your coffee means you are going to get some money soon.

HAIR

If you have long hair, and somebody with short hair combs it for you, it will break off.

If you cut your hair at home, don't throw it outside because if the birds get it to make a nest with, you will get a headache or go crazy.

If you eat bread crusts, it will make your hair curly.



BAD LUCK SIGNS

If you hear a shivering owl scream at night, it is a sign of bad luck in the near future.

It's bad luck to open an umbrella in the house.

It's bad luck to whistle in the house.

It's bad luck to sweep the dirt off the porch after the sun has gone down.

You should not sew on Sunday, because after you die you will have to pull out all the stitches you sewed with your nose.

If a black cat crosses the road while you are driving, you are supposed to mark a big X on the windshield to take off the spell.

If you leave to go somewhere, and then realize that you forgot something, it's bad luck to turn around to get it.

Always go out the same door that you entered a house or you will have bad luck.

When someone passes the salt to you, make them put it down before handing it to you or you will have bad luck.

It's bad luck to step over someone's feet. If you do, step back across them.

It's bad luck to step on the cracks in the sidewalk.

You will have bad luck if you walk with one shoe on and one shoe off.

Never kill a frog because it will bring you bad luck.

If you hand another person an open knife be sure he returns it to you open. If he hands it to you closed, then you return it to him closed or you will have bad luck.

Don't ever give away a knife unless the person you give it to gives you something in return. If you don't do this, it will "cut" your friendship.

You can give a person salt, but never lend it to him.

Never sweep the trash from one room to another. Pick it up in each room.

13

MISCELLANEOUS

Chop a dog's tail off and bury it under the front door step and the dog won't ever run away from home.

If your nose itches, someone is talking about you.

If your dress hem turns up, kiss it and you will get a new one.

If a dog is howling, put a shoe in the corner and he'll stop.

If you step in a whirlwind, you will see the devil beating his wife.

If you have your baby at home, have a "good person" take it outside first, because if a bad person takes it out the baby will be like him.

Always let the husband sleep on the outside of the bed or the wife will have pains like the husband does.

If it rains on your wedding day, you'll shed a tear for each raindrop.

If you drop a dishcloth while washing dishes, you'll have company before you eat again.

If you spill salt, take pinch of the spilled salt and throw it over your left shoulder so that you won't have a fight with someone before sundown.

When walking along the street with someone, always go around something in your path on the same side or you will get angry with each other.

Always stir batter in the same direction.

A wish made on a falling star will come true.

If you don't put your tongue in the hole of a "just-pulled" tooth, it will turn out gold.

If you get a chill, you are going to sneeze.

If you right hand itches, you're going to shake hands with a stranger.

If your right eye itches, you're going to get mad with someone.

If your left eye itches, you're going to get pleased.

Don't walk in another person's tracks because if you do it will give you a headache.

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

Photograph by Jim L. Dees

John
Thomson
1763
1850
R.I.P.
1891
1702
1784
20
34

THE
END